

GRAMOPHONE

AUGUST 1958

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE

SIR THOMAS

Beecham

BART. C.H.

conducts **BEETHOVEN**
SYMPHONY No. 2
"THE RUINS OF ATHENS"

(Incidental Music)

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
& BEECHAM CHORAL SOCIETY

ALP1596 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ r.p.m.



HIS MASTER'S VOICE L.P. RECORD

Photo: FAYER, LONDON



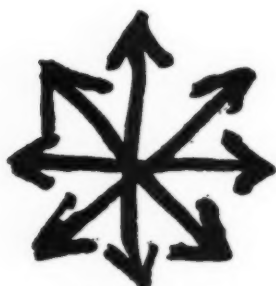
here



there



all over the world



and everywhere

Every day records and hi fi equipment go out from Imhofs to all parts of the world. Our wide range and huge stock enables us to supply any record or instrument currently available in Britain.

We handle all insurance and customs papers and our specialist packers ensure that your order arrives in perfect condition.



Our long-standing reputation for service is your best guarantee for complete satisfaction. Write today for details of this scheme, and of our Personal Export Scheme for overseas visitors.

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Van Cliburn

The greatest pianistic discovery of the age . . .

23 year old Texan winner of the Moscow Tchaikovsky Piano Contest

. . . now signed to an exclusive contract with RCA records

Tchaikovsky

CONCERTO No. 1

Conducted on this record as at the contest by

Kiril Kondrashin

RB-16073



This is one of the two concertos which Van Cliburn played in Moscow and has since presented with resounding success in America and, at the end of June, in London's Royal Albert Hall. The following quotations are typical of press reaction all over the world.

'The popular Tchaikovsky was splendid in every respect . . . although he has a prodigious technique . . . he never left the impression that he found his principal satisfaction in bravura display . . . always remaining inside the music even when not playing at all.'

THE TIMES

'Technically his playing is certainly most remarkable . . . More remarkable in a young virtuoso was the attention that he paid to details of timing and balance when his was not the major role . . . Here he revealed the unmistakable musician's instinct . . .'

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Vortexion quality equipment



Model W.V.B.

Our specialised MONITOR HEAD MODEL W.V.B. has an additional head and amplifier which enables this recorder to perform a number of useful functions. The most important of these is to monitor the recorded tape a fraction of a second after it is made, and if necessary compare it by throwing a switch, with the signal before it is recorded. This allows the recording engineer to make certain that he has made a first class recording before the artists leave the studio, without the necessity of waiting while another run through is made.

Additional items may be recorded one on top of another while listening to the first, since a switch is provided for the erase, and the bias, which also acts as a partial erase, can be lowered slightly, and its new value checked on the meter. In a similar manner the original signal may be fed back and recorded, resulting in an echo, the time constant of which is controlled by the speed of the tape and the distance apart of the heads.

VORTEXION RECORDERS use a synchronous capstan motor to ensure accurate recording and playback speed.

FOUR CHANNEL ELECTRONIC MIXER

This is a studio quality electronic mixer suitable for any climate. The controls are hermetically sealed, and great care and selection of components to make certain reliable low noise operation, and individual screens prevent break through. The built-in power transformer is screened and potted, and all the microphone transformers are individually potted in selected heavy gauge Mumetal boxes. Front or rear inputs and outputs may be obtained to order. The normal output is .5 volt.

The 3-CHANNEL MIXER and PEAK PROGRAMME METER is similar to the above but has the additional meter fitted calibrated in 2 db steps from -20 db to +12 relative to i.m.w.—600 ohm. The meter is fed by the full P.P.M. 1 second time delay circuit which includes a stabiliser valve,

Many years of steady development have enabled us to still further improve the Vortexion W.V.A. and W.V.B. recorders.

All components which could contribute to noise or reliability are carefully measured and selected individually before incorporation, resulting in an exceedingly low background noise and distortion with frequency response within ± 1.5 db 50-10,000 c/s and ± 3 db 40-12,000 c/s at $7\frac{1}{2}$ " per second.

★ The meter fitted for reading signal level will also read bias voltage to enable a level response to be obtained under all circumstances. A control is provided for bias adjustment to compensate low mains or ageing valves.

★ A lower bias lifts the treble response and increases distortion. A high bias attenuates the treble and reduces distortion. The normal setting is inscribed for each instrument.

★ The distortion of the recording amplifier under recording conditions is too low to be accurately measured and is negligible.

★ A heavy Mumetal shielded microphone transformer is built in for 15-30 ohms balanced and screened line, and requires only 7 micro-volts approximately to fully load. This is equivalent to 20 ft. from a ribbon microphone and the cable may be extended 440 yds. without appreciable loss.

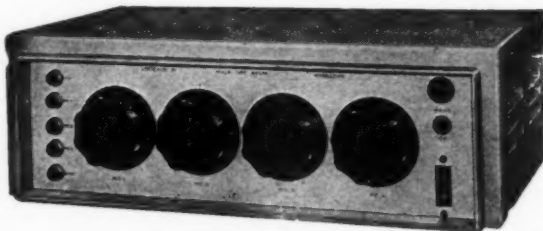
★ The 0.5 megohm input is fully loaded by 18 millivolts and is suitable for crystal P.U.s, microphone or radio inputs.

★ A power plug is provided for a radio feeder unit, etc. Variable bass and treble controls are fitted for control of the playback signal.

★ The power output is 4 watts heavily damped by negative feedback and an oval internal speaker is built in for monitoring purposes.

★ The playback amplifier may be used as a microphone or gramophone amplifier separately or whilst recording is being made.

★ The unit may be left running on record or playback, even with 1,750ft. reels, with the lid closed.



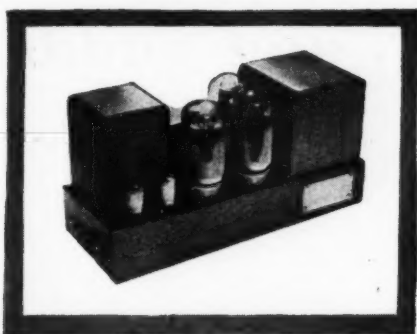
to ensure accurate gain and calibration. The standard output is screened primary and i.m.w.—600 ohm balanced or unbalanced by switch. Inputs and outputs may be at the front or rear, and rack panel mounting is available at the same price.

Full details and prices of the above on request

VORTEXION LIMITED, 257-263 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London, S.W.19
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... and suddenly, you are there

When you listen to stereophonic sound with a Jason Stereophonic Amplifier, you open the last door into the concert hall, and you are suddenly, breathtakingly there.

The J.2-10 has been designed for use with all possible stereo programme sources—disc, tape or radio. Used with two C.Q. Reproducers (endorsed by Jason technicians) the J.2-10 lets you listen with a sense of spaciousness and detail you have never known before.

Styled to match all other Jason High Fidelity Equipment, the J.2-10 is a complete double amplifier, each section of which is identical in performance and characteristics to the J.10 including 5-position input selector switch and variable low pass filter system. At the turn of a switch, you can use the two 10 watt stages in stereo, or combine both to provide a very powerful 20 watt instrument for still better reproduction of single source material.

The Jason JSA.2 stereophonic Amplifier offers stereophonic reproduction for less outlay. Output is 3 watts from each section with 20dB negative feed-back. The JSA.2 is suitable for use with crystal stereo pick-ups and 4, 8 or 15 ohm speakers. Styling conforms with other Jason matching equipment.

Jason Stereophonic Amplifier J.2-10 £37.10.0.: JSA.2 £23.15.0.
C.Q. Senior Reproducer £18.7.6.



Full descriptive leaflet of J.2-10 and other Jason Matching Equipment on request.
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EVER since the first Ferrograph was made, we have steadfastly resisted the temptation to build down to a price. Or to manufacture a range of Tape Recorders at different price levels. To us—and to those who choose the Ferrograph—price is not the decisive factor. What really counts is quality of performance—the ability to capture on tape every sound, however complex, and to re-create it with a realism virtually indistinguishable from its original.

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SERIES 44

As illustrated above, for installation into own cabinet.

Model 66N 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ "/7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " i.p.s. 84 gns.

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PURPOSE

LONG
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"99"

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99/3		3" dia.	250'	—	9 6
88/3N		3½" dia.	175'	—	7 6
99/3N		3½" dia.	250'	—	9 6
88/6	"Junior"	5" dia.	600'	£1 3 6	£1 1 0
99/9		5" dia.	850'	£1 10 6	£1 8 0
88/9	"Continental"	5½" dia.	850'	£1 10 6	£1 8 0
99/12		5½" dia.	1200'	£1 17 6	£1 15 0
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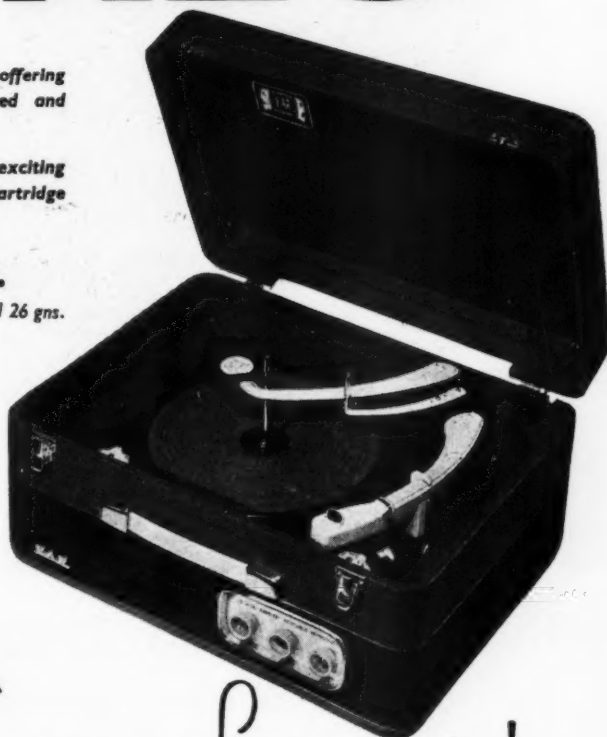
As soon as you have bought your stereo discs, you can enjoy all the exciting qualities of Stereophonic sound reproduction by plugging-in a Stereo Cartridge and one or two Extension Speakers. *

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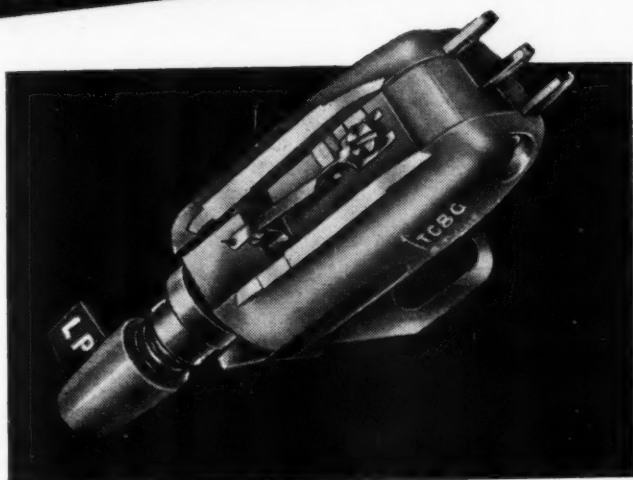
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UNIVERSAL TURNOVER CRYSTAL CARTRIDGE *for stereophonic, microgroove and standard discs*

This is the news everybody has been waiting for. Now—at last—a universal turnover crystal cartridge which plays stereo records with no more fuss or bother than for standard records.

No complicated plug-in heads which are so easily lost and damaged—just a simple turnover cartridge which plays stereophonic, all microgroove and 78 r.p.m. records. The sleek "Ful-Fi" lines and snapfork housing facilitate easy servicing and cleaning.

The "Ful-Fi" universal turnover crystal cartridge is available only in the UA8 and UA12 "Monarch" record changers. Where stereophonic reproduction is contemplated, the only logical choice is a record player which has the "Monarch" UA8 or UA12 record changer incorporated with this revolutionary universal cartridge.

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...ideal for monaural or stereo sound

A new departure in loudspeaker enclosure design and construction enables the superbly styled "twelve-2-four" to be sold at a price drastically lower than that of other units of comparable quality. ACOUSTIFLEX (prov. patent)—a new, unique method of loading, together with the main Philips 12" Dual Cone Drive unit and two special H.F. units fitted with foam surround give an extremely high and well-balanced quality of reproduction with wide-angle coverage making the "twelve-2-four" ideal for stereophonic or monaural reproduction.



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Total magnetic flux	134,000 Maxwells

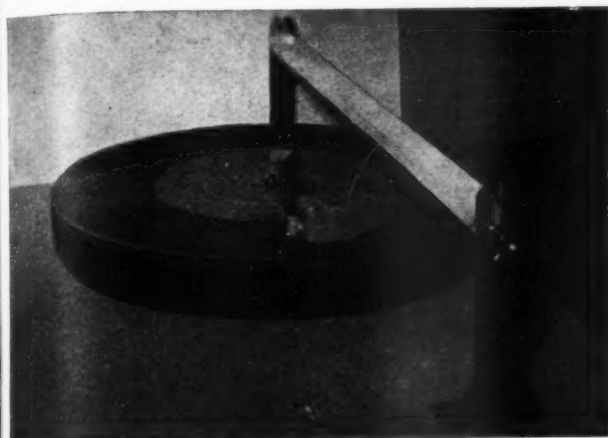
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Any record purchased is not only a brand new, guaranteed unplayed factory copy, but it has been obtained from the manufacturers by special order for the purchaser. Besides being unblemished the disc is also as up-to-date a pressing as currently available in the country. This is tremendously important when it is realised that many of the older L/Ps (especially Decca) are currently being recut from the master tapes by the manufacturers with marked improvement in reproduction.

For

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years

The World's Widest Range of Gramophone Equipment

The arms of models having the plug-in head feature are wired and technically approved for stereophonic reproduction when used with the correct Pickup Cartridge, as specified by the Amplifier Manufacturer.

1 MODEL RC 121/4D MARK II

Will play automatically any number of records up to 10, either 7", 8", 9", 10" and 12" diameter, at 16-2/3, 33-1/3, 45 or 78 r.p.m. 10" and 12" records of the same speed can be mixed in any order. No setting for any record size required, the selection being completely automatic.

2 MODEL RC 98/4

This unit can be used as either a manually operated truly High Fidelity record player or a fully automatic record changer which will play any number of records up to eight. With 4 speeds, an electrical speed control and a switch click suppressor; it is indeed the record player for the connoisseur.

3 MODEL RC 88/4

This four speed automatic record changer will play automatically any number of records up to eight. It is superbly finished in cream and brown enamel.

4 MODEL TA/MARK II

This single record player has been produced to meet the demand for high quality units of minimum size at low cost. It is mounted on a rectangular unit plate and is considered the most suitable model for the home constructor.

5 MODEL 301

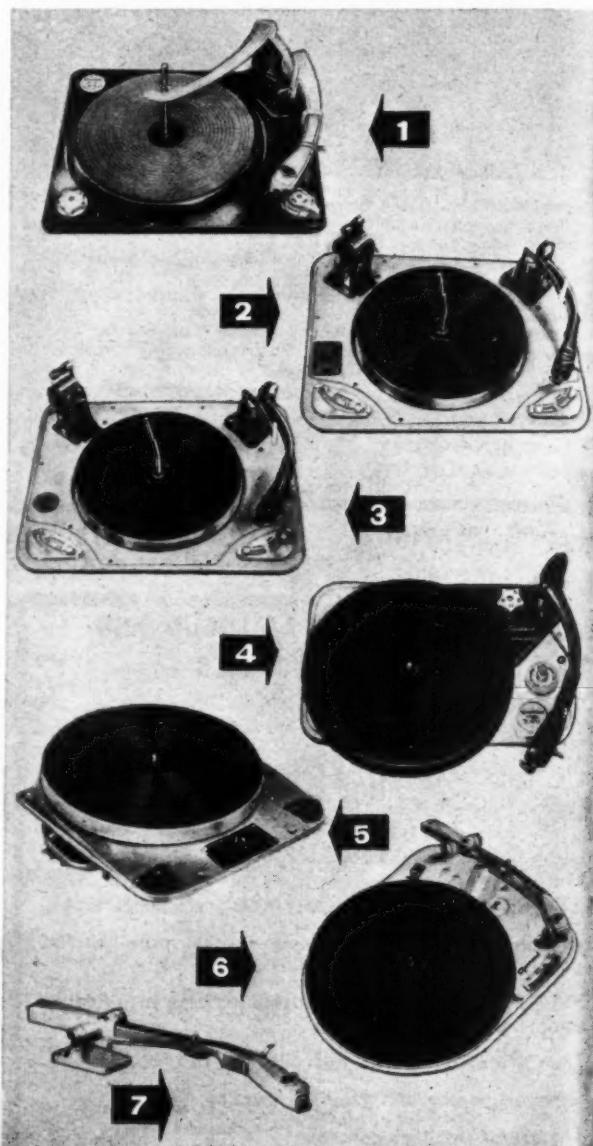
This motor has a 6 lb. accurately balanced die cast aluminium turntable. It is of the shaded pole induction type, is in heavy cast casing and is magnetically screened. The precise speed can be obtained by means of the eddy current brake. It is used by the B.B.C. and many broadcasting stations throughout the world.

6 4 HF

A high quality record player with 12" turntable complete with tone arm mounted on unit plate.

7 TPA 12

This precision chrome and white tone arm has been designed for the finest high fidelity system. Its length reduces track error to a minimum and permits the playing of 16" records if so desired. The universal plug-in head moulding will take any cartridges. All the best features of static balance, spring loading and viscous damping have been designed into the TPA 12 to provide maximum vertical freedom. The smallest possible number of pivots reduce traversing friction to absolute minimum.



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... and now for **Stereo**

Goldring-Lenco Gramophone Transcription Units are now wired for stereophonic reproduction. Naturally, they can also be used for ordinary monaural reproduction. Most modern high quality monaural cartridges can be fitted quite simply in the pick-up arm and there is provision for fitting the new stereo cartridges as they become available. One—the Ronette "Binofluid" stereo cartridge, with a diamond stylus—is already available and is suitable for use with monaural LP discs *now* as well as for stereo discs later. Goldring-Lenco Transcription Units are already very well known but a leaflet will gladly be sent to those who wish to learn more about them.

GL56/RD (Diamond fitted Ronette Binofluid Stereophonic Cartridge) £21.12.0. Plus Purchase Tax £3.3.6 • GL56/500 (Monaural—Sapphire stylus) £17.5.0. Plus Purchase Tax £5.14.11 • GL56/600 (Monaural—diamond for LP sapphire for 78) £23.4.0. Plus Purchase Tax £9.1.0.



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ANNOUNCE

A Stereophonic Demonstration Test Record

No. SDD.1 (12" double-sided LP 33½ r.p.m. record)

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Subscription Office 49 Ebrington Road, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex

Telephone: WORDSWORTH 2010

Trade Office 11 Greek Street, London, W.1

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QUARTERLY RETROSPECT

By JOHN WARRACK

It scarcely needs pointing out that modern music is box office anathema. This is one of the few predictable items in the taste of that jumpy, suspicious, backward, emotional but doggedly loyal Aunt Edna who is the collective subconscious of the British public. A strike of any sort will fluster her and keep her at home (this quaint fact comes from Mr. T. E. Bean, manager of the Royal Festival Hall); she will guarantee a show that has survived its first year, however precariously, for a further twelve months by rolling in from all parts of the country with thermoses in crammed charas; she will stand through thick and thin by an old pianist who has really nothing left but his memories; but slip a modern work into her favourite diet of Beethoven and Tchaikovsky, and you might be offering to lace her tea with cyanide.

Eagerly though some of us press for more music of our own time, it is hardly surprising that limited companies with books to balance and shareholders to placate cannot regularly afford to take the stand they would like. Anyone who has worked with concert promoters or publishers or record companies will be familiar with the situation of editorial idealism having the gleam taken out of its spectacles by flinty-eyed sales sense. What is so consistently surprising is the fact that the cause of modern music is, by and large, so well served by the gramophone companies, who receive no grant, unless we count the occasional British Council backing for special recordings like the H.M.V. discs of symphonies by Fricker and Simpson and the new Pye Tippett set (of which more anon). There are gaping chasms in the catalogue, but many have been well filled, and a bridgehead has been thrown across one or two others; we are lucky to have as much as we do.

Widest of all the gaps has been in the representation of twelve-tone music and, above all, of Schönberg. Search the current catalogue for an extended example of his twelve-tone music, which has, after all, exerted the most far-reaching effect of any musical idea since Bach consolidated the diatonic system, and what do you find? Vox et praeterea nihil. So this new record (PL10530) coupling the violin and piano

concertos must rank as an event of major importance, whatever your own regard for Schönberg.

The great advantage of having a difficult work on records, of course, is that you have a chance of really getting to know it. Schönberg is a difficult composer, and his difficulties lie at two levels. There is, firstly, the complexity; and though much of the music in these works is indeed deeply complicated, a good deal of it is also more straightforward and direct in appeal than many people, strenuously summoning all their intellectual resources, can bring themselves to believe. If you put on dark glasses as a precaution against being blinded by science, you won't see the point of anything displayed in a reasonable artistic light. But, in any case, the technical complexity need not matter except to the composer or the special investigator. Music is not written for other musicians, nor even as one great intellect calling to others; and Schönberg was always the first to put off musicologists who treated his own as a subject for research rather than pleasure. A far greater difficulty for most people (myself included) lies in what one can only vaguely call the general atmosphere or sound of the music, the *Klang*. I simply happen instinctively not to like the noise of Schönberg's music, and only after listening to a work of his a great many times to feel the ever-present admiration joined by anything like real appreciation. This is not criticism, I know, and I do not feel myself to be a useful critic of Schönberg's music: the works that I believe are his purest achievements—the later chamber pieces, these two concertos among them—are the ones I have the greatest difficulty in approaching; while I am quicker on the uptake with the works that have an easier “way in”, whether via relationship to one's experience of another composer (Berg generally) or through their dramatic impact and wider appeal—the powerfully moving *Survivor from Warsaw*, for instance. Not that Schönberg is a narrow composer: these two concertos are of extraordinary range and variety. The Vox record enables one to realise that. But it is an atmosphere in which I become quickly short of breath and uncomfortable; and

whilst training on this record has worked an improvement in staying power and genuine enjoyment, it still appears to me an unwelcoming countryside. The performances, by Alfred Brendel (piano) and Wolfgang Marschner (violin) with the Südwestfunk Orchestra, seem excellent, especially when one considers the frightful difficulties involved; the balance, no less difficult to achieve and thematically of the greatest importance, is sometimes less good.

One of the least satisfactory ways of pleading a composer's cause is to flood the market. Some form of Home Guard will soon have to be organised against the mass invasions by flotillas of baroque concertos that are always steaming up over the horizon. It may be convenient to have eighteen flute concertos by Vivaldi at one fell issue, and Vivaldi is a fine composer whose cause could do with pleading; but this is a perfect example of having too much of a good thing. A well-chosen selection is another matter, and the Columbia set of three records devoted to Hindemith is admirable; especially so since the composer himself conducts. The late arrival of the gramophone has deprived us of some wonderful experiences—one thinks wistfully of Bach improvising in St. Thomas's, of Farinelli and all the others of his amazing tribe who were, so to speak, cut out for fame, of Mozart and Beethoven playing their own piano concertos, of Liszt and Paganini, Grisi and Mario... Fruitless: but while no performance is, or ever will be, “definitive”, we ought never again to have to wonder how the composer thought it should go. Hindemith is a forthright and extremely efficient conductor of his own music, and some of his best works have been chosen for this set. The third record, which is to contain the horn concertos (Dennis Brain) and the *Sinfonia Serena*, has still not materialised. The first (33CX1512) couples the B flat symphony for concert band (American for brass band) with the splendid Concert Music for brass and strings written for the Boston Symphony Orchestra's 50th birthday—only one of a marvellous batch of presents that included Roussel's third symphony and Stravinsky's Symphony of Psalms. The other (33CX1533) has the clarinet concerto (Cahusac) and one of the composer's greatest works, the *Nobilissima Visione*.

Hindemith is never less than impressive, and once one is “inside” his music the parched land it often seems at first can yield

a dignified sense of beauty not shared by any other living master. The operas *Mathis der Maler* and *Die Harmonie der Welt* make their best effect when symphonically treated, as Hindemith appears to have suspected: the similarity of much of the material operates against the drama, since the characters tend to be insufficiently personalised, but this matters less when they are no longer connected to dramatic action and act instead as food for pure musical thought. And in the *Nobilissima Visione*, the Concert Music, indeed in nearly all the works in this set, Hindemith's infallibly impressive manner reaches a belief and eloquence undimmed by the dustier reasoning that sometimes afflicts him.

For a somewhat lighter side of his talent we may safely turn to two recital records. Shura Cherkassky (H.M.V. ALP1574) is remarkably eloquent with the third piano sonata, taking subtle liberties (though none so extreme as the huge *rallentando* Hindemith himself puts into the Concert Music at one point), and giving the work a measure of lyricism, poignancy even, to which it is hardly accustomed. Wolfgang Schneiderhan shares his recital with Carl Seemann out between three modern masters (D.G.G. DGM18400). In Hindemith's 1939 violin sonata he is lithe, blithe and trenchant, particularly with the 5/8 movement—a remarkable virtuoso study in the rhythm's subtleties and potency. It is a fine, attractive work, even if overshadowed by the other items on the record: Schneiderhan gives the best available version of Stravinsky's Duo Concertant, but the very virtues that help to produce this—impeccable control and a well-dressed sense of rhythm—are almost a disadvantage in Bartók's profusely rich, essentially rhapsodic second sonata. But Bartók-lovers have their disc of the quarter in Annie Fischer's account, with the L.S.O. and Markevitch, of the third piano concerto backed with the Dance Suite (H.M.V. ALP1588). Bartók-beginners, too, could do worse than go for this enjoyable pair. Slightly more advanced candidates should attempt the sonata for two pianos and percussion coupled with Stravinsky's piano concerto (D.G.G. DGM18384). Carl Seemann, the concerto's soloist, is joined by Edith Picht-Axenfeld in the sonata.

Before turning away from the present century, there is the long-overdue recording of Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*—a gap now nobly filled by Pye on CCL30114-5 (this is poached from D.S.-T.'s side of the court, with permission). Flawed and uneven as the work is, Tippett's burning sympathy for the victims of intolerance and irresponsibility inflames the music and lifts it above its own shortcomings. The *Midsummer Marriage* Ritual Dances fill side 4, a startling tribute, in the context, to the advance of Tippett's art. In the oratorio there are only stray suggestions—as in the trumpet note that corrupts the soprano's voice on the word "cancer"—of the finely-shaded instrumental sensibility Tippett has mastered from the opera onwards. No one, for instance, has ever made the woodwind utter a sound quite like this in the first dance. John Pritchard conducts these excellent perform-

ances. In a lighter, but no less musically responsible vein, there is H.M.V. CLP1172 coupling Britten's brilliantly inventive *Matins* and *Soirées Musicales* with Malcolm Arnold's attractive English and Scottish Dances.

Klemperer's Beethoven symphony cycle proceeds apace. Nos. 3, 5 and 7 are safely recorded, and seem to me the most desirable performances of any. About the new *Pastoral* (Columbia 33CX1532) I am not so sure. Klemperer's supreme virtues as a Beethoven conductor include the ability to seize us by the throat and compel our concentration, whether we are ready to give it or not. In his *Eroica* and No. 5 the heroism is, as Beethoven all his life insisted, not merely an inflamed mood but a necessary human stand; in the *Choral* there is (as Beethoven always suggests) a strong air of demand—Joy is a compulsory subject and no slacking will be tolerated. This strength that is Klemperer's greatness bears heavily on the *Pastoral*. It is as if we were being marched through the country by a granite-faced Nature mistress insisting that we shall enjoy ourselves. The very slow tempos contribute: the *Peasants' Merrymaking* is a formidable affair, more like a plodding Dutch clog-dance than a burst of Austrian gaiety. Beethoven's spirit was, in a sense, taking a day off in the country; and though

there is a welcome refusal in Klemperer's reading to admit any mere softness, he remains relentlessly at the pulpit.

No sooner have we recovered from György Cziffra than here is Tamás Vášáry (D.G.G. DGM19105)—a Liszt pianist of all Cziffra's technical wizardry and with a vein of poetry as well. Not only are there several places where this unknown, unheralded young pianist clearly possesses three hands; even in the *Rigoletto* paraphrase there is a tingling sensitivity, a real feeling for the control of the iridescent tone-colours and gigantic volume range his fingers can evoke. His rhythm is irresistible, from the almost insolent lilt of the *Valse Impromptu* to the proud stamping of the sixth Hungarian Rhapsody. I wish he would record the sonata.

I cannot pass over two performances by another, senior pianist, Solomon. A greater artist than his undemonstrative integrity has ever seemed to admit, Solomon is perhaps at his finest in Beethoven; and two H.M.V. records (ALP1546 and 1583) with Herbert Menges and the Philharmonia of the first and third concertos (each with an attendant sonata) are a worthy offering. Do listen, for instance, to the authority and humanity with which Solomon unfolds the *Largo* of No. 3: not Schnabel himself excelled this.

QUARTERLY PROSPECT

OR "WHY DON'T THE RECORDING COMPANIES . . . ?"

By DENIS STEVENS

HARDLY a day goes by without this Journal's postbag bringing readers' requests and letters for recordings that are, for one reason or another, unobtainable. Many of these enquiries are about artists and composers, but by far the greatest number is devoted to appeals for definite works in every known recorded category. Some few of these indefatigable writers make such a show of indignation about the absence of such-and-such a work that one is tempted to check the catalogues; sure enough, the "missing" item is there all the time, and has simply been overlooked in the heat of the argument. In other cases the records are available to special order, or tantalisingly are to be found in foreign catalogues, inaccessible to the British collector.

By way of example, we have requests for symphonies by Honegger, Nielsen, Dvořák, Schubert—yes, and even Beethoven. Only the third and fifth of Honegger's symphonies is available in England, though American catalogues offer in addition the second. Nielsen No. 6 is (like Dvořák No. 3) available only across the Atlantic, where the keen collector will find an alternative version of Dvořák No. 1 by Leinsdorf and the Cleveland Orchestra. The Beethoven desideratum is none other than the so-called "Battle" Symphony, released in America as "Wellington's Victory". Both the Schubert E major Symphony (in Weingartner's arrange-

ment) and the "Gastein" Symphony, this latter in a choice of two performances, are there for the transatlantic enthusiasts; here in Britain, which boasts a Schubert Society as well as a burdensome tax on records and the musical instruments purchased by fledgling professionals, neither work can be bought.

What is the answer to this strange state of affairs, whereby even the best of British light music is denied to would-be purchasers? One wants music by Roger Quilter, other than the songs; another wants orchestral music by Sullivan, other than operatic overtures and the inevitable *Di Ballo*. They can find it easily enough by taking their next vacation in New York and spending their 100 dollar allowance on discs, leaving, however, sufficient funds in the bank to pay duty and purchase tax on their LPs when they land once more in this blessed isle. But this, for most people, is not a realistic answer. They would argue that it is easier for makers to press the discs here, even though the result may be that they get English music recorded in Vienna, processed in America, and then shipped back home. It might seem a more reasonable and less expensive idea to record English music right here in England.

This does not happen to any great extent. A great deal of foreign music of all kinds is recorded here, with of course vast numbers of foreign artists, not all of whom eclipse the

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The August issue of 'RECORD TIMES'—price 1d. from your record dealer—features an article on Carl Orff by Peter Racine Fricker.

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best of our native—or Commonwealth—singers and players and conductors. There is still, alas, snob value in a foreign name, even though it might be common to the point of comical when translated. No collector in his right mind would bother with a *Faust Symphony* by Frank Flour, *Nebuchadnezzar* by Joseph Green, or Gus Painter's *Symphony of a Thousand*. Nor will he put himself out to acquire many of the other works suggested, eminent and beautiful though they may be, since legend has it that foreign collectors will be even less enthusiastic about Holst's *Egdon Heath* and Bax's *November Woods*, a perhaps rather bleak coupling mentioned by one spartan correspondent. There is not the slightest doubt about their being fine works, but they need to be placed with contrasted material.

It cannot be denied that British works are poorly represented in British catalogues. The oft-quoted maxim that our music is not in general exportable is accepted by many as gospel truth, but in fact there is a distinct interest in what our composers are doing, and a desire to hear their newest works, certainly in America if not in Europe. Yet I can think of at least half-a-dozen gifted composers who have not had a single work recorded, and many others of an older generation who have only recently penetrated the recorded sound-barrier. This neglect (as one of our correspondents says) "is deplorable; the neglect of major works is unpardonable".

But according to the economists a record company is bound to look for some kind of return for a handful of orchestral sessions costing many hundreds of pounds. Even if this expenditure can be amortised by subsequent sales, the processing and production of an LP has still to be paid for, so that a privately guaranteed sale of 1,000 simply won't do. It is sometimes argued that record companies might reasonably be expected to act as reputable publishing houses do, in issuing certain works whose prestige value is great though the sales expectation is small. Many will claim that they do just this in making available to the public such a wide variety of chamber music and Lieder, to mention only two genres of the less immediately salesworthy kind. Collectors, however, can fire back at this lofty claim by pointing out that planning and co-ordination is so poor that the duplication common in the sphere of orchestral music is now creeping up on chamber music. There are six versions of Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* quartet; but only one of the great G major, Op. 161. A colleague of mine recently pointed out that the section on Haydn's Quartets in the *Classical Record Catalogue* makes sad reading: "Opus 50: No recording. Opus 55: No recording. Opus 71: No recording. Opus 74: No recording." Yet some of the more popular Haydn symphonies offer a choice of eight different recordings.

In fact each area of recorded sound needs careful investigation and planning, and this work should be entrusted to experts who are musicians and at the same time scholars. Due to the advocacy of such men, composers who have previously been no more than text-book names have suddenly leapt

into prominence, to the advantage of all concerned. The bother is that certain ideas, begun in good faith and with honourable musical intentions, have a tendency to run away with themselves, so that certain sections of our catalogues look for all the world like musico-tropical vegetation. Other sections, in contrast, resemble the remoter regions of Alaska or Siberia, so barren are they and so lacking in interest and colour.

Those who write and ask for recordings of unfamiliar orchestral works are often unaware of another important feature of record-making, and its influence on the choice of music. I refer to the conductor, who may either be told what to record, or (if he is famous enough) demand to record what he wants. Now it is an accepted fact that conductors are rewarded for their services, generally speaking, on a royalty basis. Thus, if they give a superlative performance and sales are good, their reward will be proportionately greater than it would have been if they had contented themselves with a routine play-through. But another factor seriously affects their royalty returns, and that is the music itself, quite apart from the quality of the orchestra or soloist. Suppose, for example, that I have been reading scores by once eminent composers of the romantic era, and strongly recommend that a symphony of Raff (1822-82) be recorded. Joseph Joachim Raff was at one time a highly respected composer, both in Germany and in England, but hardly anything is heard nowadays apart from a *Cavatina* played by café violinists. But there are ten symphonies to choose from, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that one of these is worth engraving. Now comes the question: what conductor is going to risk his chances of success with a Raff symphony, even if a record company could be found to embrace the idea? If he records Tchaikovsky No. 5 that new Bentley will be his in six months; if he takes on Raff he won't even be able to afford a push-bike.

So, dear reader, it is up to you. If you and your younger, up-and-coming contemporaries will go on buying "Tchaik 5" and "Rakkers 2", there won't be any incentive for conductors to record second-rate German composers, let alone first-rate British ones.

Some collectors complain, quite rightly, about the indiscriminate recording of pre-classical music, much of which (as every musicologist and bibliographer knows) is of little worth. Yet the Italian concertos emerge, in their dozens, like strings of onions; all very similar, and in most cases not very well played.

Much the same is true when we move back into the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Here there is too great a tendency to regard early music as a collection of little tit-bits, each lasting a minute or two, with never a thought of broader aspects, or forms approaching in dignity and expanse those of later ages. We look rightly upon the symphony as the pinnacle of formal perfection from Haydn to Brahms, and well beyond, if some aberrations are overlooked. What is the medieval equivalent to this unified, symmetrical, and orchestral

form, running for a convenient 25-50 minutes? The answer is, of course, the Ordinary of the Mass, whose four or five sections may fill one or both sides of an LP, and give the same feeling of unity and diversity as the finest classical symphony. But the number of tolerable recordings of complete Masses is negligible. Compare this with the thousands of symphonies in the catalogues and you realise why early music never has a chance. For one thing it is often performed by amateurs or part-time professionals; for another it is rarely well engineered. Try and imagine a performance of *Rosenkavalier* by an amateur operatic company, with incomplete resources and a technician who has never recorded opera in his life, and you have some idea of what is wrong with much of the current approach to music of earlier times.

Mention of religious music brings to mind numerous requests and letters for more organ recordings. There is indeed room for improvement here, for though the catalogues contain an adequate supply of Bach there is a poor representation of other organist-composers. One correspondent, besides suggesting Schumann, Reger, Hindemith and Distler, asks for more French and English music: Franck, Mulet, Dupré, Langlais, Stanford, Parry and Howells. Unlike many organists, he is broad-minded enough to bring in the names of pre-Bach composers: Buxtehude, Lübeck, Tunder, Pachelbel and Bruhns.* To this one might again add a galaxy of early French and English composers, besides a host of great men from Spain and Italy. Organs are not expensive items to record, nor are organists' fees as high as those of star conductors. It might thus seem feasible for a progressive company to look into the situation more closely, with a view to closing at least some of the more obvious gaps.

The law of demand and supply is as true in the field of recordings as in any other. If collectors with specialised needs can make out a good case for their favourite artists and composers, it is only right that they should be considered; but in the end it will depend on whether the sales are likely to reach worth-while proportions. Very little will be gained by forming small societies, each devoted to one composer. But if the small cells united to produce a group of 10,000, who would agree to accept works chosen by a panel bound to respect, in turn, all the broader areas of taste, the result would be a formidable pressure-group each of whose members, at the end of a year, would have a small library of discs capable of stretching his musical mentality like a rubber band. The trouble is that most musical mentalities are about as flexible as a rod of iron; and until there is a change of heart no such scheme could possibly come into operation.

* See page 108 of this issue

STILL OBTAINABLE
CLASSICAL LP CATALOGUE
JUNE, 1958

LETTER FROM AMERICA

By HAROLD C. SCHÖNBERG

ABOUT all one hears in the American record world these days is stereo and its ramifications. At the point of writing, quite a few stereophonic discs are commercially available, though none of the major companies has made their product available to the public. Critics and people in the trade, however, have had a chance to sample the stereophonic discs of all companies. The equipment manufacturers, too, are rushing stereophonic models into production, at prices ranging from slightly over \$100 (approx. £30) to stratospheric sums. On the basis of what I have heard, I have the feeling that in a few years stereo discs will have taken over the major share of the market. The sound at best is extraordinarily impressive. Naturally some manufacturers have gone in for "gimmicked" records with a high separation content: one choir of instruments in Channel A, other choirs in Channel B, both channels "ping-ponging" back and forth. This was to be expected with a toy as new as stereo is. But fortunately, sanity seems to be prevailing among the larger companies. Stereophonic discs of standard works I have heard sound clear and natural; and the two speaker systems do supply a new dimension. It is almost possible to achieve this dimension by playing a monaural LP disc through a stereophonic system. Naturally there is no separation or true stereo involved, but there is a strange stereo illusion whereby one *thinks* one is hearing different instruments coming out of the speakers at the same time. And cutting one of the speakers from the circuit suddenly makes the sound flatter and less interesting. The end is nowhere in sight. The present situation is reminiscent of the early days of LP, where improvements and new techniques were forthcoming every month. So will it be with stereo; and the end result should be breathtaking.

Last month—stereo excitement aside—was a month where an amazing amount of baroque music suddenly hit the market. Bach and Vivaldi predominated. The Vivaldi discography, indeed, begins to approach that of Bach and Brahms in volume. Two Vox discs present Vivaldi concertos: four bassoon concertos, with Virginio Bianchi and the Accademici di Milano under Pietro Santi; and, with the same orchestra and conductor, Alberto Caroli is heard in five oboe concertos. Good, sturdy playing here; and the music flows along with Vivaldi's startling fecundity. The Paris Wind Ensemble, on an Epic disc, plays a Vivaldi concerto for flute, oboe and bassoon, as well as a Haydn divertimento (of which the second movement is the one used by Brahms for the *St. Anthony Variations* and a Mozart cassation in E flat (a disputed work attributed by some scholars to Beethoven). Angel Records offer a group of harpsichordists headed by Thurston Dart in the Vivaldi-Bach Concerto for Four Harpsichords in A minor, and also an

arrangement for four harpsichords by Dart of Vivaldi's Concerto for Four Harpsichords in D minor, plus Bach's Concerto for Three Harpsichords in G and Malcolm's pleasant Variations for Four Harpsichords on a Theme by Mozart. The theme is a movement from a Mozart duo.

The various series of Bach organ music go apace. Carl Weinrich is up to Vol. VII in his Westminster undertaking. This new three-disc album contains the six Trio Sonatas and five Trios and an Aria in F. Epic's organist is Anton Heiller who, in Vol. IV, plays several preludes and fugues and fantasies and fugues. Like Weinrich, he uses a baroque organ. He is not as objective as Weinrich, however. His registrations are more interesting, and there is an appealing delicacy to his work.

Haydn Society, in the process of reorganization, has reissued several discs from their old catalogues: the six Haydn quartets of Op. 33; the Charpentier *Te Deum* and other pieces; the four Bach Suites with Hewitt and his orchestra; the two Haydn Organ Concertos in C and the Cembalo Concerto in G; and also a disc of Mozart piano music played by Lilli Kraus, part of a projected complete Mozart piano series. Another baroque item, from Epic, presents I Musici in the Concerti Grossi, Op. 7, of Geminiani. One of the fine moments on this disc is the extremely lyric Concerto Grosso No. 5 in C minor: a work of utmost beauty. Westminster has a disc of twelve harpsichord sonatas by Cimarosa—charming, lightweight music, well played by Veyron-Lacroix. There also are two Pergolesi discs. One comes from Epic, and contains the *Salve Regina* and the *Stabat Mater*, both with Italian singers and an orchestra conducted by Francesco Molinari-Padellani. The music is amazingly Mozartean; some of the writing prefigures such works as the Mozart *Requiem*. On the other disc is an opera named *Le jaloux corrigé*. This is a Westminster release of a rather strange work. Pergolesi is represented in this opera, but much of the music was composed by one Michel Blavet, who in addition took several arias from *La Serva Padrona* and incorporated them into his pastiche. French singers and an orchestra are conducted by Jean-Francois Paillard.

Quite the most unusual release of early music is contained in five Experiences Anonymes discs of English material: (1) *14th and Early 15th Century English Polyphony*; (2) *English Medieval Songs*; (3) *Lute Songs by John Dowland*; and (4 and 5) *Six Harpsichord Suites by Handel*. Russell Oberlin, accompanied respectively by Seymour Barab (viol) and Joseph Ladone (lute), is the counter-tenor in the medieval and Dowland music. He is joined by Charles Bressler, tenor, and Gordon Myers, baritone, in the polyphonic music. Paul Wolfe is the organist in this disc and also in the two Handel discs.

It is hard to overpraise the tasteful, well-

prepared, scholarly and appealing performances on these five records. Space prevents a full listing of the contents. The medieval songs go back to the twelfth century; the Handel, of course, to the mid-eighteenth. Especially impressive is the disc of English polyphony, in which the three singers display unusual purity of line and stylistic resource. But all of the material is fascinating. A modern recording of the Handel suites is long overdue. Wolfe plays the six he has chosen in an unhurried manner, and he has no hesitation ornamenting when he thinks the music requires it. One hopes that he will complete the Handel suites on LP.

Early music apart, there are some interesting discs among current releases. Vox has several, along them Mozart's C minor Mass, with Wilma Lipp, Christa Ludwig, Murray Dickie, Walter Berry and a chorus and Vienna Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Grossmann. Some of the singers in the solo quartet are sorely taxed by the music, but this is nevertheless an honest, sensitive interpretation. The chorus especially is praiseworthy; it is not too large and sings with a flexible quality. On the opposite end from Mozart is the Vox disc of Stravinsky's *Capriccio* (Alfred Brendel and the Symphony Orchestra of South West German Radio conducted by Harold Byrns) and the Concerto for Two Solo Pianos (Brendel and Charlotte Zelka). Brendel is one of the best of the younger pianists, and his performance of the *Capriccio* has style as well as technical strength. Less satisfactory is a Vox disc that couples the Schumann A minor and Chopin F minor Piano Concertos. Maria Tipo is the pianist. She has much skill but not much poetry, and these versions cannot challenge the great exemplars on LP.

Nor does the playing of José Iturbi in Mozart's E flat Piano Concerto (K.482) suggest much of the refinement of the music. It's all on the surface as he plays and conducts the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra (Angel). More convincing stylistically is George Solchany, whose Angel disc of Bartók piano music is assured and imaginative. Solchany presents quite romantic, non-percussive performances. Bartók himself played his piano music much in this style. Another pianist heard to good advantage is Walter Hautzig, who skillfully plays some light Schubert for Haydn Society: the *Deutsche Tänze* (Op. 33); *Valses Nobles* (Op. 77), twenty-one waltzes from Op. 9 and ten from Op. 50.

Hello Out There, a chamber opera (three singers, thirteen instruments) by Jack Beeson to a text by William Saroyan, has been recorded by Columbia. Frederick Waldman is the conductor of this opera, which tries for a big lyric line and has recognisably traditional operatic contours. If the try does not entirely come off, it is because Beeson's lyric gift is just a shade contrived. His melodic lines are carefully manufactured rather than spontaneous-sounding. On the whole, *Hello* is very much in the Douglas Moore idiom, with its somewhat self-conscious use of American nationalistic elements.

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have not been exaggerated, Van Cliburn made as much of a success in London as he did at his Carnegie Hall appearance after winning the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. (He even received a New York reception normally allotted only to Channel swimmers and military heroes—a ticker-tape parade up Broadway.) Victor signed him to a contract, and the first disc, which has been rushed on the market, contains—you guessed it—the

Tchaikovsky B flat minor, with an orchestra conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. This is the billionth or so recording of the concerto (at least, it seems so). It is also one of the very best. For once, every note can be heard; there is no bluff, smear or fakery. Tonally, Cliburn reminds veteran listeners of Josef Lhevinne: he has the same kind of strength and nuance; also the same big hands and the same kind of technique. He is on his way toward a brilliant career.

INDEX TO REVIEWS

	Page		Page
BACH		GRIEG	
Brandenburg Concerto No. 3.....	105	Peer Gynt Suite No. 2.....	117
Church Cantatas—excerpts.....	110	Sigurd Jorsalfar—Suite, Op. 56.....	101
Concerto in D minor, BWV1062.....	98	Symphonic Dances, Op. 64.....	101
Flute Sonata, BWV1035.....	106	Two Elegiac Melodies, Op. 34.....	101
Partita for solo violin, No. 2—Chaconne only.....	105		
Sonatas for viola and harpsichord, BWV1027-9.....	106	HANDEL	
BARTOK		Messiah—excerpts.....	111
Dances Populaires Roumaines.....	108	Water Music—Suite.....	117
Mikrokosmos, Volumes 5 and 6—excerpts.....	108		
Pour les enfants, Volume 1—excerpts.....	108	HAYDN	
Suite, Op. 14.....	108	Concerto for violin and harpsichord, HV XVIII.6.....	101
BEETHOVEN		Harpichord Concerto, HV XVIII.1.....	101
Coriolanus—Overture.....	117	String Quartet, Op. 3, No. 17—Serenade only.....	117
Egmont—Overture.....	117	String Quartets, Op. 76, Nos. 1 and 2.....	106
Piano Sonata No. 8, "Pathétique".....	116	Symphony No. 99.....	101
Piano Sonata No. 14, "Moonlight".....	116	Symphony No. 102.....	101
Quintet in E flat, Op. 16.....	106	Toy Symphony.....	102
Ruins of Athens—Incidental Music.....	98		
Symphony No. 2.....	98	HOVANESS	
Symphony No. 5.....	98	Concerto No. 1, "Arevakal".....	100
Symphony No. 7.....	99		
Symphony No. 9.....	116	IRELAND	
Trio in B flat, Op. 97, "Archduke".....	114	Piano Concerto.....	102
BERLIOZ			
Beatrice and Benedict—Overture.....	99	JANACEK	
Damnation of Faust—Suite.....	99	The Cunning Little Vixen.....	102
Reverie and Caprice, Op. 8.....	105	Taras Bulba.....	102
Roman Carnival—Overture.....	99		
Romeo and Juliet—Suite.....	99	KOZELUH	
Symphonic Fantastique.....	99	Bassoon Concerto in C major.....	101
BRAHMS			
Sixteen Waltzes.....	109	LEONCAVALLO	
St. Anthony Variations.....	116	I Pagliacci—excerpts.....	112
BRUCKNER			
Symphony No. 7.....	100	LISZT	
BRUHNS		Hungarian Fantasia.....	103
Organ Works—Heintze.....	108	Hungarian Rhapsody No. 13.....	117
CHAUSSON		Piano Concerto No. 1.....	108
Poeme, Op. 25.....	105	LOCATELLI	
CHOPIN		Violin Sonata in F minor.....	103
Ballades, Nos. 2 and 3.....	117		
Etudes, Opp. 10 and 25.....	109	LUBECK	
Fourteen Waltzes.....	115	Organ Works—Heintze.....	108
Impromptus—Slenczynska.....	109		
Les Sylphides—Ballet Suite.....	100	MAHLER	
Piano Concerto No. 1.....	100	Songs from "Das Knaben Wunderhorn" and from Ruckert.....	111
COWELL			
Symphony No. 4.....	100	MARTINU	
DELIBES		Violin Sonata No. 3.....	107
Coppelia—Ballet Suite—excerpts.....	117		
La Source—Ballet Suite.....	100	MEYERHOFER	
DVORAK		String Quartet, Op. 2, No. 1—Canzonetta only.....	117
The Golden Spinning Wheel.....	116	Symphony No. 3.....	103
The Wild Dove.....	116	Symphony No. 4.....	103
FALLA		Violin Concerto.....	116
Nights in the Gardens of Spain.....	101		
FIBICH		MOZART, LEOPOLD	
Sarka—complete.....	111	Musical Sleigh Ride.....	102
FILS		Toy Symphony.....	102
Flute Concerto in D major.....	101		
FIOCCO		MOZART, WOLFGANG	
Suite No. 1 in G—Allegro only.....	105	Fantasia in D minor, K.397.....	109
FRANCK		Organ Sonata, K.370.....	107
Symphonic Variations.....	115	Organ Sonata, K.371, 323, 336.....	107
GRAINGER		Piano Sonata No. 11, K.331—Rondo only.....	107
Mock Morris.....	119	Piano Sonata No. 15, K.545.....	109
Molly on the Shore.....	119	Quintet in E flat, K.425.....	106
Londonderry Air.....	119	Symphony No. 29.....	116
Shepherd's Hey.....	119	Symphony No. 32.....	104
		Symphony No. 35.....	104
		Symphony No. 38.....	104
		Symphony No. 40.....	116
		Symphony No. 41.....	116
		Violin Concerto No. 4.....	116
		Violin Sonata No. 18.....	105
		Violin Sonata No. 21.....	105
		PUCCHINI	
		Various arias—Antonieta Stella.....	116
		PURCELL	
		Fantasia, three parts on a ground.....	107
		Pavan for three violins.....	107
		Ten Sonatas in four parts.....	107
		RACHMANINOV	
		Piano Concerto No. 1.....	98
		Symphony No. 2.....	104
		RAVEL	
		Bolero.....	117
		Taigane.....	105
		RIEGGER	
		New Dance.....	100
		RIMSKY-KORSAKOV	
		Capriccio Espagnole.....	104
		SAINT-SAENS	
		Havanaise, Op. 83.....	105
		Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso.....	105
		SCHUBERT	
		Impromptu, Op. 90, No. 4.....	117
		Lieder recital—Elisabeth Schwarzkopf.....	116
		String Quintet, D.667, "The Trout"—Variations only.....	117
		Symphony No. 8.....	104
		SCHUMANN	
		Piano Concerto, Op. 54.....	115, 116
		SCRIABIN	
		Twenty-four Preludes.....	100
		SHAKESPEARE	
		Julius Caesar.....	114
		Lieder recital—Elisabeth Schwarzkopf.....	114
		Coriolanus.....	114
		Richard II.....	114
		SHOSTAKOVITCH	
		Piano Quintet, Op. 57.....	107
		String Quartet, No. 8, Op. 73.....	107
		SIBELIUS	
		En Saga.....	104
		Karelia Suite.....	104
		Romance in C major.....	104
		The Swan of Tuonela.....	104
		SMETANA	
		The Bartered Bride—excerpts.....	113
		STRAUSS, JOHANN	
		Die Fledermaus—excerpts.....	115
		STRAUSS FAMILY	
		Waltzes and Polkas.....	119
		STRAVINSKY	
		Capriccio.....	102
		SULLIVAN	
		The Mikado—complete.....	112
		The Pirates of Penzance—complete.....	112
		Various overtures.....	119
		TCHAIKOVSKY	
		1812—Overture.....	117
		Suite No. 1—excerpts.....	119
		Casse Noisette Suite—excerpts.....	119
		The Enchantress—complete.....	118
		Piano Concerto No. 1.....	105
		Violin Concerto.....	103
		VERDI	
		Ballo in Maschera—excerpt.....	112
		VIVALDI	
		Violin Concerto, Op. 12, No. 1, P.343.....	103
		WAGNER	
		Die Meistersinger—orchestral excerpts, Rodzinski.....	106
		Die Gotterdammerung—orchestral excerpts, Rodzinski.....	106
		Die Walkure—orchestral excerpts, Rodzinski.....	106
		COLLECTIONS	
		Elizabethan and Jacobean Music.....	110
		English Church Music—Canterbury Cathedral Choir.....	116
		Guitar recital—Laurindo Almeida.....	109
		Piano recital—Rubinstein.....	101
		Poetry reading.....	113
		Song recital—Enrico Caruso.....	114
		Song recital—Vladimir Rushdiak.....	111
		Song recital—Alessandro Valente.....	116

REVIEWERS' NOTES

J.N. writes:

A correspondent tells me that the credit for discovering the early English organs on which Thurston Dart plays music by Handel and Purcell (see my review on p. 497, May issue) should go to Mr. Neville Boyling. Mr. Boyling was also responsible for a series of broadcasts on the Third Programme last autumn in which four English organs of the 17th and 18th centuries were heard, and I am glad to acknowledge our debt to him.

ANALYTICAL NOTES AND FIRST REVIEWS

By

ROGER FISKE . TREVOR HARVEY . PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE
MALCOLM MACDONALD . WILLIAM S. MANN . JEREMY NOBLE
ANDREW PORTER . ALEC ROBERTSON . LIONEL SALTER . DENIS STEVENS



ORCHESTRAL

BACH. Concerto in D minor, BWV1052.
RACHMANINOV. Piano Concerto
No. 1 in F sharp minor, Op. 1.
Stanislav Richter (piano), Radio
Symphony Orchestra of the
U.S.S.R. conducted by Kurt
Sanderling. Parlophone PMA1037
(12 in., 4ls. 8½d.).

Bach (piano):
Fischer, Orch. (12/57) COLH15
Foss, Zimmler Sinf. (6/53) AXTL1012
Richter, Czech P.O., Talich (3/58) LPV262
Rachmaninov:
Lympny, Philh., Malko (3/55) CLP1037
Rachmaninov, Philadelphia, Ormandy (12/56) CSLP609

It was this performance of the Rachmaninov, which the B.B.C. broadcast two years or so ago as a tape-recording from the Soviet radio, which first brought Richter to the notice of the musical public in this country, and which immediately awakened wide interest to hear more of an obviously major artistic talent. Since then we have learnt something of the pre-eminence he enjoys in Russia, have learnt with regret that he does not travel outside the Iron Curtain, and have had two or three discs by him which have been greeted in terms of the highest enthusiasm by most critics. A re-hearing of the Rachmaninov confirms that we were absolutely right in going overboard about that performance: this is superb playing, by any standards. Technical virtuosity we are becoming almost blasé about, nowadays; but Richter is brilliant—how brilliant you may hear in the finale, which is enough to take one's breath away—without being gaudy or vulgar. In fact, the adjective which springs to the mind about this playing is "aristocratic"—a word particularly apt to the music of the young Rachmaninov. Richter's unerring sense of phrase, his sensitive tonal colouring and his wonderful articulation recall, in fact, the composer's own magnificent playing. The orchestral support is excellent, though I find the heavy vibrato of the horns almost unbearable—the opening of the *Andante* sounds exactly like a saxophone. The recording, if no more than fairly good, is acceptable enough, but there is a suspicion of tape-flutter occasionally on sustained piano notes.

About the Bach I must declare myself a good deal less enthusiastic, though recognising its virtues. These seem to be entirely on the soloist's side—a rock-steady rhythmic sense without being inflexible, an unforced tone (one might even think the piano too distant in the first movement) and, again, beautifully controlled articulation. But the whole feeling is inescapably anachronistic: the steamroller approach of too many strings (recorded roughly, also), great woofing basses (listen to the opening of the first movement), and an *Adagio* taken at an agonisingly slow speed. All I can say is that this is better than Richter's other recording of the same work; but if we are to have Bach's clavier concertos on the piano at all, Lukas Foss's kind of interpretation is more in accord with the spirit of the original.

L.S.

BEETHOVEN. Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36. *The Ruins of Athens*—Incidental Music, Op. 113. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham with the Beecham Choral Society, Chorus Master: Denis Vaughan. H.M.V. ALP1596 (12 in., 4ls. 8½d.).

This disc arrived just before press day, and there has been no time to make detailed comparison with other versions of Beethoven 2. These have been in the hands of T.H. (4/58 was the last one), who recommends Toscanini, Scherchen and the latest Sanderling. Beecham's performance is full of his inimitable fire, and the recording is fiery too. The orchestral playing is not quite as polished as one expected: some smears in string runs, some tiny lapses in ensemble. They don't disturb, but they surprise. In the interpretation I particularly liked the steady pace of the scherzo which contrasts well with that of the finale, and enables the trio to move *mismo tempo* at its proper pace; I liked the malicious flick of the iambic figure in the coda of the finale (the first two notes of the principal theme), and all the *pianissimi*, real ones, and the pace of the second movement which seems ideal. There are certain moods in which one would prefer a more classical performance; but history relates that the first impact of the second symphony was much as Beecham conveys it.

Nevertheless the point of the record is that it includes the *Ruins of Athens* music, or at least a good portion of it. The overture, slight but attractive, is quite well known, as is the Turkish March, but not the rest. *The Ruins* was an occasional piece with a libretto of startling vivacity; but out of it

Beethoven was inspired, within a very short time, to write some glorious music. The Dervishes Chorus is a piquant "novelty number", with some stunning key switches. The chorus "Where freedom hath triumphed" is the suave, almost Mendelssohnian Beethoven of the late E minor sonata. The pick of the bunch, a movement in Beethoven's greatest vein of dignified energy, is the March and Chorus, "Twine ye garlands", which comes last on the side, begins in the distance, builds up to the choral entry and finds its climax in a coda of sublime E flat grandeur—the best of Beethoven for all that it was expended on a trumpery tribute to a mortal monarch.

As you would expect, Beecham makes the most of this, and which his admirers will understand, more than the most of the less wonderful movements, the Turkish March for instance, which he endues with immense individuality and whimsy and tonal refinement. The men of the choir are firmer voiced than the ladies, but the last chorus is well sung. The G minor duet, quoted in the overture, the final chorus, and an off-stage wind number, as well as a short recitative, are omitted. I have played through them on the piano, and can see why. But the rest is a signal gain to the LP repertoire.

W.S.M.

BEETHOVEN. Symphony No. 5 in C minor. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Philips GBR6509 (10 in., 27s. 10d.).

This is a very alive and immaculately played performance of the symphony. Ormandy has clearly exercised great thought over the smallest detail, the whole thing is as careful as it is brilliant. Why then does it leave me so unmoved? I can only suggest that it is the lack of what the Germans call *Innigkeit* in the conductor, of deep inward feeling. The result is a great deal of energy in the fast movements without much real power, and playing in the slow movement that doesn't get behind the notes in the score. It is, in fact, the difference between Ormandy and, say, Klemperer.

A few notes on the performance itself. Ormandy does the first movement repeat, I was glad to note, for it needs it: but he does not make the mistake of doing the same in the finale. In the first movement, however, I was surprised to find him placing the *ff* mark on the second quaver of bar 228 (just before the recapitulation) and again 12 bars later, a practice which I thought had been discredited long ago. The pace of this movement, and also of the finale, seems to me just too quick and it is no doubt this that largely contributes to the impression of energy without true power.

The slow movement is somewhat prosaic and here the impression comes partly from the lack of a really hushed string *pp* in several places—those moments in Beethoven when you feel you scarcely dare breathe.

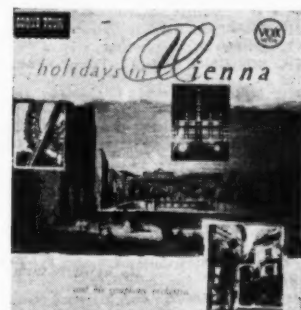
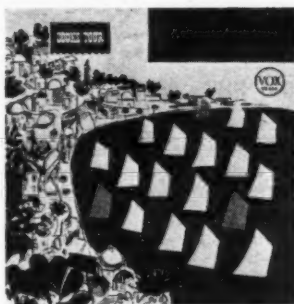
I have already mentioned the super orchestral playing as such and in the Trio of the Scherzo it is particularly remarkable (including some wonderful soft playing)

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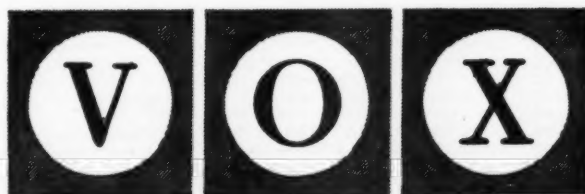
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but the final pizzicato bars are again too loud and solid. Perhaps the recording has something to do with this. It is a good recording on the whole and only at the start of the 3/4 section of the finale did I notice something that didn't seem so satisfactory—an apparent change of acoustic.

Admirers of Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra will no doubt find this fully up to their hopes. Others will go for a conductor—Klemperer probably—who will give them more profound satisfaction. T.H.

BEETHOVEN. Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by **William Steinberg**. Capitol P8398 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

As might be deduced, Steinberg gives an admirable performance of the Symphony, well balanced in its parts, sensible in its tempi, ably played and well recorded. If it were not that Karajan, Kleiber, Klemperer and Toscanini (reissued now in a favourable new edition) had put on record performances that in their different ways reached a higher level than this one, we should be able to welcome the new record without reserve. A.P.

BERLIOZ. Roman Carnival, Op. 9—Overture. Beatrice and Benedict—Overture. Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by **Sir Adrian Boult**. Nixa NEC23000 (7 in., 15s. 3½d.).

One may not, perhaps, think of Sir Adrian as a Berlioz conductor, but these two overtures are very well done—fiery where necessary, and on the whole elegant. At times one becomes aware that more is being asked of the Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra than it can happily supply, so that there is a certain amount of raggedness towards the end of *Beatrice and Benedict*, but on the whole these are very good performances. The recorded sound is excellent. J.N.

BERLIOZ. Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14. Paris Conservatoire Orchestra conducted by **Ataulfo Argenta**. Decca LXT5423 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

Concertgebouw, Beinum	(3/52) LXT2642
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Boston S.O., Munch	(10/55) ALP1384
French Nat. Rad., Cluytens	(7/57) 39CX1439
Minneapolis S.O., Dorati	(11/57) MRL2532

This was one of the last recordings made by the late Ataulfo Argenta, and it would be nice to welcome it as indisputably the best available version. For various reasons I can't quite do that, although there are many good things about it. Argenta's approach to the music is careful (in the sense that he takes care over details of phrasing and dynamics) but not lacking in dynamism; in fact the most violent passages in this performance are on the whole the best. In general, too, he is scrupulous in his treat-

ment of tempi, taking few of the liberties which some conductors seem to feel are justified by the word "fantastic" in the title. This makes it the more surprising that he should make a marked *accelerando* at the dotted-rhythm passage half a dozen pages before the end of the March to the Scaffold; it sounds as if the horses had suddenly run away with the tumbrel—not ineffective, but not really necessary either.

The main weakness of Argenta's performance lies not in tampering with the music, but rather in a lack of that subtle flexibility that shows a conductor has an over-all conception of the whole work. It is very difficult to analyse the reasons for this. Presumably the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra must know this symphony backwards, so that even though they cannot bring the same degree of technical polish to it as, say, the Philharmonia or the Berlin Philharmonic they should be able to follow every nuance of the conductor's baton. Why then should the rhythm of the reprise of the waltz-theme in the second movement (p. 81 of the Eulenburg score) sound so lumpy and graceless? In several places throughout the work there is a lack of repose, of relaxation, when it is clearly needed: for example, in the long statement of the Beloved's theme on unison woodwind in the first movement (p. 27 and following), and again in parts of the *Scène aux Champs*. This may be partly the fault of the recording, which is not always willing to give us a real *piano*, but I find it very difficult to make up my mind whether in some of these places Argenta had actually succeeded in getting a real *piano* from the orchestra in the first place. The desolate oboe theme at p. 39 of the score is a case in point; is it Argenta's fault or the engineers' that this (and the bars before it starts) are too loud? And someone has been guilty of a real miscalculation over the bell in the last movement; it is marked *forte* in the score, but also *lontano*, distant—an effect that it is not always possible to achieve in the concert-hall but which should be a welcome challenge to modern recording techniques! And is it my imagination, or was someone present with a gong to give the bell-notes added sonority?

This must all sound rather carping, but the total effect of a number of such small weaknesses is to rob the performance of the spontaneous poetry that this work must have if it is to convince us. The recording, apart from the fault I have mentioned, is excellent—certainly the most vivid of the available versions, even though it may sound a little shrill on small loudspeakers. The performance is also a distinguished one, with many exquisite moments (p. 108, for example), but it lacks the total conviction of Markevitch's on D.G.G. because conductor and orchestra are not so completely at home with one another that they can do equal justice to both the languorous and the brilliant pages of this symphony, and (still more difficult) move from one to the other with complete confidence. It would be interesting to know how much rehearsal Argenta had for this performance, and how much Markevitch had for his. J.N.

BERLIOZ. Damnation of Faust, Op. 24—Suite. Romeo and Juliet, Op. 17—Suite. Paris Opera Orchestra conducted by **André Cluytens**. Columbia 33CX1544 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

The *Damnation of Faust* suite is pretty well standardised: the *Hungarian March*, *Dance of the Sylphs*, and *Will o' the Wisp's Minuet*. The *Romeo and Juliet* suite, perhaps unfortunately, is gradually becoming so; here it is *Roméo seul, et la grande fête*, the *Scène d'amour*, and the *Reine Mab* scherzo. While this undoubtedly includes the greater part of the best music in the work, yet it is also the greater part of all the music in the work, making it difficult to accept, on record, the loss of the vocal sections (the introduction to the *Scène d'amour* is cut).



André Cluytens (Photo: E. Bronsder)

What is left, however, goes quite a long way towards forming a satisfactory instrumental *Romeo and Juliet* symphony on its own; and the Paris Opera Orchestra also go a long way towards giving every point to the marvellous music. They are, however, reluctant to drop to anything resembling a true pianissimo, and this robs Berlioz's finely calculated sound of some of its magic. A little more is lost, too, in the *Queen Mab* scherzo, where the harps—as so often—play their harmonics an octave too high, as if Berlioz were using modern harmonic notation. But on this occasion he was not; his *Traité d'Instrumentation* puts the matter beyond a doubt, quoting part of this actual passage to clinch the point.

The *Damnation of Faust* excerpts go very well indeed—particularly the *Sylphs' Dance*, which receives something like a magical performance. The *Hungarian March*, too, gains from unexpectedly firm brass-playing; indeed throughout the record only an occasional solo horn gives a comparatively harmless and tentative wobble. Throughout the record, too, there is a good and clear quality of sound, lacking only something of richness in the larger climaxes. The two suites are separated by much too short a silence; once an almost universal failing of L.P.s, this is now happily so rare as to call for comment. M.M.

BRUCKNER. Symphony No. 7 in E major. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by **Eugen Jochum**. D.G.G. DGM18112-3 (two 12 in., £4 3s. 6d.).

Concertgebouw, Beinum (11/53) LXT2820-30

Each of Bruckner's last three symphonies, Nos. 7, 8 and 9, has a sonorous lustre and intensity of spirit that grows more and more treasurable through the years for those who elect to live with them. I would recommend the newcomer to make first acquaintance with Bruckner through the fourth, "Romantic" Symphony which is paradoxically more Schubertian and extrovert, more classical, than the late symphonies; but these too present no problems to anyone already familiar with the world of *The Ring* and *Parsifal*. Bruckner is by no means an enigmatical, bewildering composer as some people feel Sibelius is. It always seems strange to me that in England, where we love our Wagner and are perfectly willing to stand for an hour and a half for an uninterrupted Prom performance of Elgar's *Geronius*, Bruckner's Symphonies should be less popular (to put it mildly) than those of Brahms.

The reference to Elgar is not quite inapposite; very often a melody or a harmonic progression in Bruckner recalls the Elgar that we love. There's an instance in the scherzo of Bruckner 7, where the theme could easily be guessed, in a musical quiz, to be by Elgar. And if Elgar profited, in *Geronius*, from the inspiration of *Parsifal*, so did Bruckner in the Adagio of this symphony—it was inspired by a premonition of Wagner's death which actually occurred towards the end of the movement, where the tubas take up the flute theme and transform it from sweetness and light into dignified melancholy. But Bruckner's symphonies are not simply symphonised Wagner or Elgar à l'Autrichienne or even high-romantic Schubert. He is Bruckner, and his symphonies are glorious masterpieces. To protest that they are dull because they are not like Brahms is irrelevant; if you like Brahms and Wagner, and all the composers above mentioned, there is no reason why Bruckner shouldn't strike on your box.

Brucknerites have been grateful, for almost ten years, to the Decca set conducted by Van Beinum, which was first issued on 78s and later reorganised on to three LP sides with Franck's *Psyché* as fill-up. The set has recently been re-processed and still sounds superb. The new D.G.G. version has the advantage of still more modern microphone and balancing techniques; marginally, I would say, the D.G.G. sound is more wide-ranging and immediate, with very exciting brass (particularly trumpets), and the blend of corporate tone has moments of a splendour that cannot be approached in the earlier set—there's an example quite early in the first movement when woodwind, horns and plucked strings create a texture of glorious warmth and immediacy. But the scales aren't sound-wise, wholly tipped towards D.G.G. Decca's tubas in the Adagio have a perspective and character that would

survive any comparison, and the balance of wind and strings in the scherzo is more real and equal than in the later performance.

The name of Eugen Jochum is one held in awe by Brucknerites, particularly those who were record-collectors before the war—his 78 r.p.m. version of the seventh symphony was a jewel in the Telefunken catalogue almost all through the 'thirties. The rival readings of Beinum and Jochum differ to the extent that Jochum is always ready to respond generously to any striking emotional development, while Beinum seems more concerned with overall shape inside which moods are contrasted and blended. This means that Jochum's interpretation is often momentarily more striking, but Beinum makes the symphony as a whole a more unified experience.

That should lead you to the version that will best suit your taste. The new D.G.G. set is more extravagant because it occupies four as opposed to three sides; and by a mad whim the slow movement is straddled across two sides, although Jochum only takes 24½ minutes over it (Beinum's time is 19 minutes). Serious students may note that, although both versions use the Original Version, one version is, Orwell-fashion, more Original than the other; Jochum includes the great cymbal crash (with drums and triangle), Beinum apparently doesn't—which means presumably that Beinum follows the pre-war, grey-covered *Urfassung*, Jochum the newer, blue-covered recension. The cymbal crash is very thrilling, but in the last analysis I believe that the Decca set will be more gratifying. W.M.

P.S.—A friend tells me that on his gramophone he can hear the cymbal crash in Beinum's set; which means that presumably they both use the blue score.

CHOPIN. Les Sylphides—Ballet Suite. DELIBES. *La Source—Ballet Suite.* Paris Conservatoire Orchestra conducted by **Peter Maag**. Decca LXT5422 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

Les Sylphides, played in the orchestration by Roy Douglas familiar at Covent Garden, receives a somewhat forceful performance rather lacking in poetry; some of the tempi are not quite what the dancers would approve of. *La Source* is much less familiar. Delibes wrote only half the music—Act 2 and the first half of Act 3. The rest was composed by Minkus, a man whose ballet music makes up in quantity what it lacks in quality; and in the latter respect it lacks a lot. Delibes' share in the work antedates his first real success, *Coppélia*, by about four years, and he has not yet found the piquancy of melody and orchestration that make his later music so attractive. In fact at its most banal his music is indistinguishable from that of Minkus. But here and there we recognise his individual touch, and there are some delightful dances, notably the horn solo in the *Divertissement*. The story is "Eastern", with a Khan and a heroine called Naila (described as "Fée de la Source"), but the piano score does not give the detailed information about the plot that we find in *Coppélia* and *Sylvia*. The selection

of the music is intelligent and not too obvious; one or two of the better-known dances are omitted. Rather more than half Delibes' contribution is included. Performance is adequate, recording quality good.

R.F.

CHOPIN. Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11. Alexander Uninsky (piano), Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by **Willem van Otterloo**. Philips GBR6500 (10 in., 27s. 10d.).

This is the fifth new record of a Chopin concerto in as many months. It costs more than the Abbey Simon/H.M.V. version which gets the whole concerto onto a single twelve-inch side by cutting much of the orchestral introduction, and less than the Halina Czerny-Stefanska/D.G.G. version which needs both sides of a twelve-inch disc for the one work. Philips have found the best possible format for this particular concerto. Their new disc is also notable for the fact that real trouble has for once been taken to give the orchestral writing due prominence. At the end of the slow movement the string tune stands out and the pianist understands that his part here is an accompaniment—and how seldom is this so. Most of the numerous bassoon counter-subjects are clearly audible, though I do not myself much care for the saxophone-like vibrato with which the instrument is played. Much of the piano playing is sensitive and poetic. The orchestra is sometimes a fraction behind the soloist, and the violin tone for some reason sounds rather stringy, though the balance is good. This is not an outstanding performance, but it is on the whole interesting and enjoyable. R.F.

COWELL. Symphony No. 4. HOVANESS. *Concerto No. 1 for Orchestra, "Arevakal"*. RIEGGER. *New Dance.* Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by **Howard Hanson**. Mercury MRL2556 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

Mercury again introduce us to some contemporary American music (and both the main works on this disc were composed since the war). Once again one hopes to find something that makes a real impression, but once again I, at any rate, felt disappointed. I can claim no wide knowledge of the American musical scene, but I do know of at least one impressive symphony that has not yet found its way into our catalogues (by Elliott Carter) and I cannot help feeling that there is more notable music than has lately appeared on these records conducted by Howard Hanson. Still, these are presumably produced primarily for home consumption and, as far as we are concerned, everything is a contribution to our picture of what American composers are writing.

The least interesting of the pieces here recorded is also the shortest, Wallingford Riegger's *New Dance*, but it serves well enough as an overture to the concert that follows. This was originally written for a dance group and subsequently orchestrated for full band. It is nervous rhythm from start to finish and I found it empty and a

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plain bore. But I have read a number of Riegger's scores and found them of little interest.

The *Concerto for Orchestra*, by the far more interesting Hovaness, is no orchestral show-piece—better not be misled about that: on the contrary it makes not the slightest effort to be a successful concert item. It might better be called a Suite of six short movements, four of which are slow and very bare, while the two lively ones are put together in the middle, instead of spreading their relief. Hovaness is half Armenian and is strongly influenced by Armenian ritual music. I began by being interested and thinking that this might be music by a rare mind, but before long it failed to hold me. What, I began to wonder, would Vaughan Williams' *Tallis Fantasia* be like without its composer's genius? Perhaps this Concerto needs more knowing than a critic has time for: but three playings didn't yield much to this listener.

Henry Cowell's *Short Symphony*, as he calls it, is far more immediately enjoyable, with a scherzo, indeed, that wouldn't be much out of place in Harty's *Irish Symphony* (the composer has Irish blood). True, the rest of it is more impressive and I am prepared to reserve judgment and see how it wears after more hearings.

Of course, these are all personal views, and made on a short acquaintance at that. This record should obviously be tried by any who have an enquiring mind and who want to know more about American composers. Goodness knows, our concert halls give us all too little opportunity for that.

Performances seem to be good and so is the recording. Recommended to those with an enquiring musical mind (and enough cash to risk disappointment). T.H.

FALLA. Nights in the Gardens of Spain. Piano solos. The Maiden and the Nightingale (Granados). The Miller's dance (Falla). Sevillana and Córdoba (Albeniz). Cancó i dansa (Mompou). Andaluza (Granados). Artur Rubinstein (piano), San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Enrique Jorda. R.C.A. RB16067 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.)

Both Rubinstein and Jorda were at one time closely associated with Falla; their collaboration in *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* might be expected to be a fruitful one, and in the event it certainly is. The music is here not in the least overplayed with Spanishry, but allowed its say straightforwardly. It is always, too, finely controlled in detail—the orchestral playing is particularly good, with a remarkable unanimity of attack. In the first two movements the sense of control and reserve is predominant; it is in the last that some degree of excitement, too, is added to the other qualities, but nowhere in the performance is warmth lacking.

The recording is extremely clear and well-balanced; it lacks nothing at all in brilliance, though, unlike the performance, it does sometimes lack a little in warmth. It is similar in quality for the reverse of the disc, only a slight brittleness of piano tone

standing on this side between it and the very best.

Rubinstein plays his six solos (in this context they seem something like his six encores) extremely well; he ranges through some of the well-known and some of the lesser-known Spanish pieces with great effect. *The Maiden and the Nightingale* comes off particularly well; indeed would it not have made a much better ending to the side than the other Granados piece represented, the *Andaluza*? But the principal virtue of the disc, clearly, is in any event a first-class version of Falla's *Nights*. M.M.

FILS. Flute Concerto in D major. Oldrich Slavicek (flute).

KOZELUH. Bassoon Concerto in C major. Karel Pivonka (bassoon). Prague Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dr. Vaclav Smetacek. Supraphon LPV268 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

Seeking a harmless flute concerto you could do worse than select this one of Antonín Fils (Anton Filtz), 'cellist of the Mannheim orchestra; seeking a harmless bassoon concerto you could do worse than select this one of Jan Kozeluh (Johann Kozeluch), uncle of the Leopold Kozeluch whose path crossed that of Mozart and Beethoven once or twice.

Excitement, however, runs rather low, whether of music or performance; though Karel Pivonka discloses a warm, rich bassoon tone (perhaps here rather over-emphasised by microphone positioning) which stands the instrument in very good stead as a soloist; and Oldrich Slavicek discloses much agility in his flute cadenzas. The recording is adequate; only very slightly gritty in the Fils, a little more so in the Kozeluh. M.M.

GRIEG. Sigurd Jorsalfar — Suite, Op. 56. Two Elegiac Melodies, Op. 34. Symphonic Dances, Op. 64. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Edouard van Remoortel. Vox PL10330 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

Edouard van Remoortel has already given us a Grieg disc, most attractively played (Vox PL9840) and this new one gives us more to enjoy. The *Symphonic Dances* take all of one side, and of these, the second is Grieg at his most charming—a really beautiful piece. The weak one is the last, showing Grieg's limitations all too clearly; he is trying to build something up on a big scale and be impressive but the result is repetitive and like a balloon—blown up and nothing but air in it. All the same, between these extremes there is much to enjoy in the other dances and they are the more welcome in that this is just the sort of music that gets lost these days when concert programmes are being devised.

The March from *Sigurd Jorsalfar* is more familiar, of course, though the other pieces in the Suite were new to me. Here Remoortel's interpretation is questionable on at least two points. The March begins, readers may remember, with four 'cellos playing the theme and the way it is given

here scarcely bears out Grieg's direction *marziale*. But the oddest thing is the speed adopted for the start of the second piece, the intermezzo sub-titled *Borghild's Dream*. This is marked perfectly clearly *poco andante* and is given the metronome mark of crotchet equals 66. Remoortel takes this at a speed at the very least twice as fast, completely destroying the mood of a very characteristic opening section.

For the rest, the *Elegiac Melodies* were well played and since all the music sounds well, there is much to enjoy about this record, especially as so much of it is heard so infrequently. T.H.

HAYDN. Harpsichord Concerto in C major, HV XVIII.1. Concerto for violin and harpsichord in F major, HV XVIII.6. Helma Elsner (harpsichord), Rheinhold Barchet (violin), Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, Stuttgart. Vox PL10300 (12 in., 41. 9d.).

Haydn's concertos are the least of his extended works, and the C major clavier concerto recorded here is one of the lesser among them. The tunes are sub-Handelian, full of rosalias, the forms primitive; there is a certain ingenuous prettiness about even the least enthralling music of this period, but not very much of it. The concerto was written for organ, according to the manuscript of 1756; but early copies name cembalo and clavicembalo, so that Miss Elsner is perfectly within her rights. Perhaps I would love the music more if she didn't so worry at the solo part, and if her harpsichord weren't so deafeningly recorded; more of this later.

The F major double concerto, which L.S. and others once recorded for Parlophone, is another matter. Here the tunes are like Haydn; the one in the slow movement is a particularly splendid one, like a landscape gradually revealed as clouds roll away. The finale tune is reminiscent of the minuet from *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*. The harmony and texture are much more creative and enlivening too. It's a delightful piece for an attractive combination. The harpsichord is still very forward and jangling, and the mike seems to be inside it at the bass end. Barchet is an excellent violinist, and the balance in their duets is clear. The acoustic is spacious, but the sound is raw and savage. W.S.M.

HAYDN. Symphonies. No. 99 in E flat major; No. 102 in B flat major. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Mogens Wöldike. Vanguard PVL7063 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

These are coarse, often sluggish performances that I cannot really recommend. Tempi are generally on the slow side, but far more important is the lack of really clean, keen phrasing. Try the minuet of either of these symphonies and I think you will agree that Wöldike fails to get genuinely rhythmic playing from the orchestra; each accent is too much like the next. Nor does the balance of the recording help matters. The wind are made to sound unnaturally forward—I imagine in order to compensate for too large a body of strings; the result is

that we never get a real *piano* from the woodwind, while the strings lack their proper attack.

In spite of a rather fast minuet, Krips's version of No. 99 on Decca LXT5418 (reviewed by M.M. last month) is certainly to be preferred to this one, while for No. 102 Markevitch (Columbia 33CX1458) seems to me the best of a more highly competitive field. J.N.

HAYDN. Toy Symphony.
MOZART, LEOPOLD. Musical Sleigh Ride. Vienna Concert Orchestra
conducted by **Hans Kolesa.** Philips ABE10060 (7 in., 15s. 3½d.).

I have seen neither the sleeve nor the label of this little disc, and so cannot for certain complain that the makers are serving up mutton disguised as lamb. As has been said before in these columns, the "Toy Symphony" is not by Haydn; the three movements come from a six-movement Cassation by Leopold Mozart, where they are to be found in different keys with different orchestration. There is an excellent D.G.G. record offering this Cassation on one side, and on the other a Musical Sleigh Ride by the same composer (APM 14084). The new record of course contains less music and is much cheaper, and its *Musical Sleigh Ride* is not the same one that D.G.G. recorded (Leopold used to write them for Christmas entertainments); either it is a much shorter work, or it is not here complete. The music is pleasing though hardly distinguished, and I doubt if it would stand many repetitions. The "Toy Symphony" receives a worthy and rather humourless performance. The recording is good. R.F.

IRELAND. Piano Concerto in E flat major.

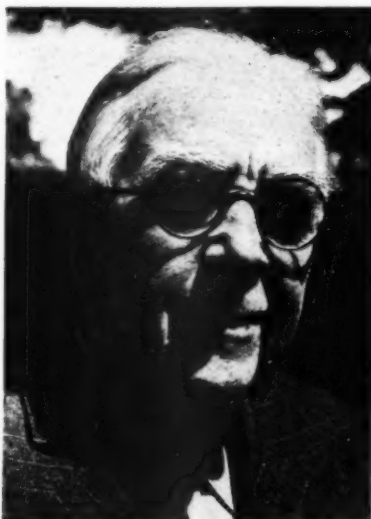
STRAVINSKY. Capriccio. Colin Horsley (piano), Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by **Basil Cameron.** H.M.V. CLP1182 (12 in., 35s. 10d.).

Capriccio:
Magaloff, Suisse, Ansermet (10/50) LXT5154
Haas, Berlin R.I.A.S., Fricsay (12/50) DGM18004

It is extraordinary that we have had to wait so long for a recording of John Ireland's Piano Concerto on LP. It is a work popular enough to be placed, and not for the first time, in the programme for the last night of this season's "Proms", instead of one of the war-horses that were once the traditional fare; and, though this is perhaps not saying very much, there are few, if any, modern piano concertos to equal it for sustained lyrical beauty and intimacy of expression. It is also the work of a composer who loves the piano and has notably enriched its repertoire.

Colin Horsley and Basil Cameron, who have been chosen to restore the concerto to the catalogues, have long been associated with it, and will indeed be performing it on the occasion mentioned above. This is wise casting, for it is by no means a concerto that more or less plays itself; and how astray pianist and conductor can go was shown on an LP of the work issued some

time ago in America. At first hearing I thought there was a little dawdling in the first movement; but after listening again that feeling was replaced by one that the right tempo had been chosen and the right amount of give and take applied.



John Ireland (Photo: J. Bowen)

Mr. Horsley keeps poetry and virtuosity well in balance and I have rarely heard him play with such beauty of expression and tone as in the lovely slow movement, in which he is worthily seconded by Mr. Cameron and the orchestra. There is a kind of rapt stillness at moments in this movement that require high artistry to realise, and here it is realised. John Ireland's original use of the drums—withheld from the first movement—seems to have escaped the notice of commentators up to now. Timpani—while the music is still very quiet—are introduced softly, their rhythm growing ever more insistent until taken over by a side-drum: and so, in this most effective way, we are led into the finale, whose principal theme is in the composer's most Puck-like manner.

The derivation of the thematic material from the "motto" at the start of the work is carried out with great subtlety, avoiding any mechanical cyclic treatment and giving a true sense of internal unity.

Here, then, we have a most satisfying interpretation of the fine work with good piano tone and balance, and well recorded, if not outstandingly.

The Stravinsky *Capriccio*, in complete contrast, was a good choice for the reverse; a brittle and engaging chatterbox of a work with, also, some graceful and expressive writing by way of contrast.

Mr. Horsley and Mr. Cameron give a livelier performance of this work than Haas and Fricsay, and I particularly liked the pianist's declamatory playing of the first section of the slow movement. Some people may prefer the generally drier playing of Magaloff, but, as T.H. said in his review, he did not pay enough attention to the

expressive elements, and certainly the woodwinds sound better in this recording. The orchestra is inclined to blanket the pianist here and there, and I should have liked a brief pause after the run up on the flute at the end of the slow movement. The D.G.G. disc has a band here.

We have had some correspondence recently from readers on the recording companies' neglect of Ireland's music: now is the time to show them that there is a public demand for it so that the success of this disc will induce the companies, we must hope, to such fine works as the *Legende* for piano and orchestra, the *Piano Sonata*, and some of the many lovely and striking solo piano pieces. A.R.

JANACEK. The Cunning Little Vixen. Taras Bulba. Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by **Vaclav Talich.** Supraphon LPV266 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

Taras Bulba:
V.P.M., Horenstein (8/50) PL9710

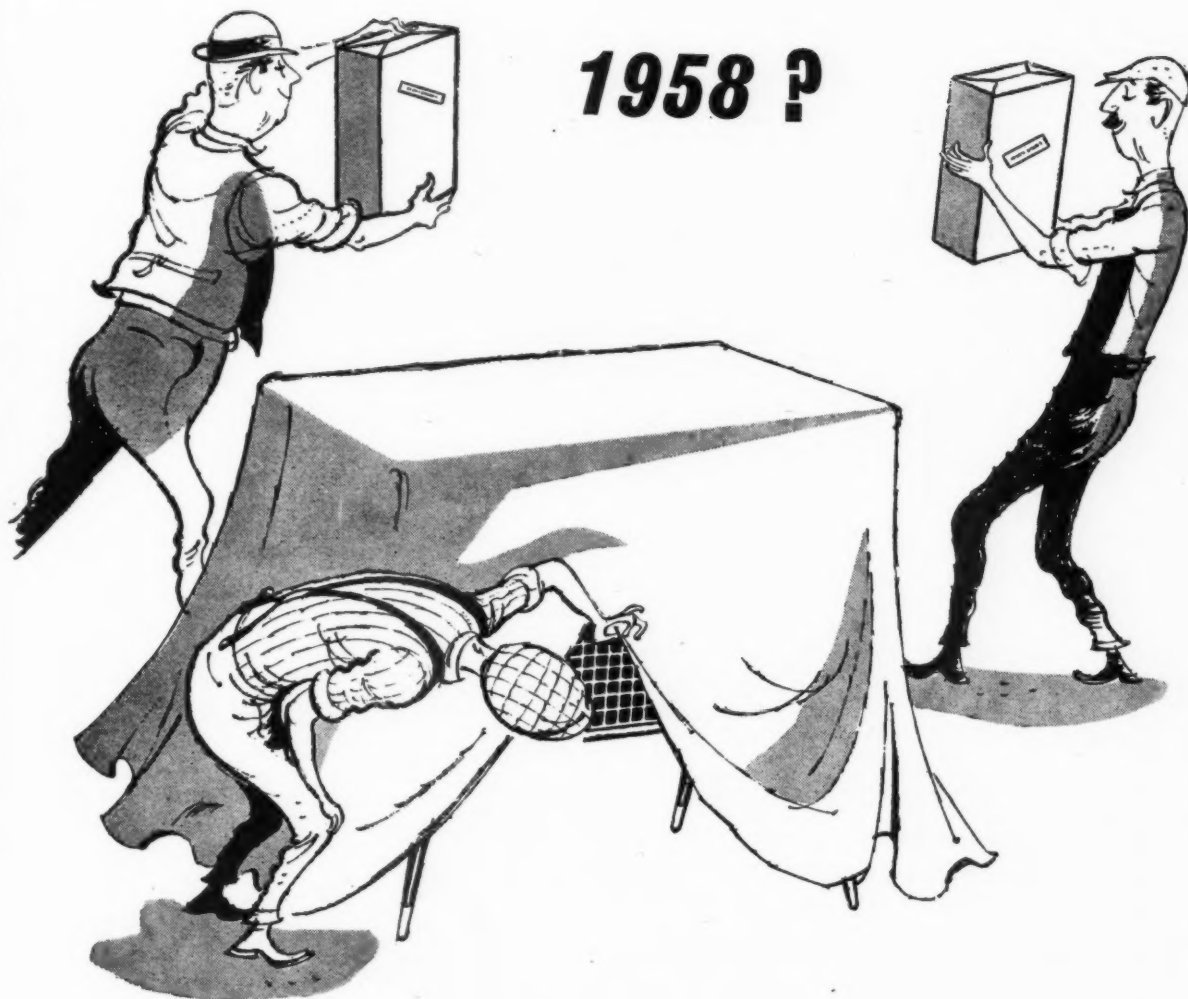
Janacek's seventh opera, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, composed 1921-3, after *Katya Kabanova*, is gradually conquering Europe, and no doubt it is only a matter of time before we see it in London. The Orchestral Suite is not listed in any catalogue of Janacek's works that I can find: a note on the sleeve tells us that it is drawn from the ballet music in the opera, "reinforced by the interludes between the individual acts". It also declares, somewhat misleadingly, that "a vocal part is added: the final song of the Forester sung in the woods bursting with life". There is no vocal part here; I assume it means that the Forester's aria has been transcribed for orchestra as part of the Suite. The music, which falls into two long movements, is entirely captivating. I imagine that the first part, which is full of atmosphere and charm, contains an evocation of the forest, and the various animal and insect dances (the dance of the flies, of the blue dragonfly, of the tipsy mosquito), while the second part contains the celebration of the Vixen's wedding to Goldenback the Fox, as well as the Forester's Aria. The music presents Janacek at his most consistently melodious, and most "continuous", with those unexpected turns and twists, highly individual scoring, and melodies which go straight to the heart. It is, so to speak, wonderfully human nature-music.

Taras Bulba, a Rhapsody for Orchestra, is a noble triptych, ruggedly heroic, but warmed by some very tender lyrical passages. The scoring is individual to the point of eccentricity (a miniature score can now be obtained from Boosey & Hawkes, at 13s.). This is a stirring work, and is given here a more convincing performance, on the whole, than it receives on the Vox disc, good though that is. Both sides of the Supraphon disc are well made—one of the best recordings to come from this company; and although the Vox has a wider range and more immediacy, the Supraphon solves problems for those who have acquired the Kubelik/Decca *Sinfonietta* (this work is coupled on the Vox) and now want *Taras Bulba* as well. A.P.

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LISZT. Piano Concerto No. 1 in E flat major. Hungarian Fantasia for Piano and Orchestra. Claudio Arrau (piano), **Philadelphia Orchestra** conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Philips GBR6511 (10 in., 27s. 10d.).

It is somehow very unexpected to find Arrau recording this pair of works. What was equally unexpected, to me at any rate, was the extreme virtuosity with which he brings them off. Not that I ever thought he lacked virtuosity—but I didn't realise he had this *sort* of virtuosity. Both works have previously been coupled by Anda (Col. 33CX1366) and by Cziffra (H.M.V. ALP1455), of whom Cziffra rightly caused an immense sensation. But I don't know that Arrau yields anything to him and these performances are on the same astonishing level.

Another unexpected thing is that, to generalise, Arrau plays with more dynamic brilliance than Cziffra and often with immense power, whereas Cziffra is in both works the more poetic. Cziffra's quiet playing pays off more in the Concerto: at a spot like the *vivace assai* of the Fantasia (the only bit of this threadbare work I really enjoy) it is a positive disadvantage and I much prefer Arrau's terrific gusto and rhythm. I much prefer, too, his far more dramatic treatment of the recitative passages in the Concerto's first movement: and, for that matter, his faster speed for the whole of this movement. But it is difficult to choose between the two. This passage is better from Arrau, than from Cziffra. Both players are indeed astonishingly good.

Cziffra gets a rounder-sounding recording but the new Philips is pretty good: and if the piano does sound a bit clanky at the start of the *Hungarian Fantasia*, well, it's the more suggestive of a cymbalon!

But if it is difficult to choose between these two performances, the choice suddenly becomes easy when you consider their relative cost. This Arrau disc is no less than 13s. 10d. cheaper. That would be enough to decide the choice for me. T.H.

LOCATELLI. (a) Violin Sonata in F minor. (arr. Ysaye).

TCHAIKOVSKY. (b) Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35.

VIVALDI. (b) Violin Concerto in G minor, Op. 12, No. 1, P.343 (orch. Barchet). **Leonid Kogan** (violin) with (a) **Andrei Mitnik** (piano) and (b) **Paris Conservatoire Orchestra** conducted by **André Vandernooot**. Columbia 33CX1546 (12 in., 41s. 8d.).

This is one of those occasions when musicianly scruple conflicts with the ordinary amateur's delight in good fiddling. Kogan is a marvellous player, no doubt, with a tone that can sound like radiant satin and wonderful agility; but there are at least a dozen other violinists in the world who can produce dazzling sounds too, and on close examination one notices that his upper register sometimes turns white, that he has a habit of ending a portamento just under



Leonid Kogan

(Photo: E.M.I.)

the desired note and then adjusting it later, and that his playing hasn't the vital character, the distinction that one looks for in an interpreter of the Tchaikovsky violin concerto.

It is presumably for the concerto that one would wish to buy this disc. Locatelli's sonata, *Le tombeau*, and the Vivaldi concerto occupy the second side, forming an ample but not apparently apposite fill-up; they are not, however, performances for the historically minded collector. The Locatelli sonata is given in a soupy transcription by Ysaye which J.N. denounced firmly in February 1957; the music is rather beautiful, I think, provided that one approaches it as rather highbrow teashop fare, with its scoops and zingaresque twiddles and anguished double-stopping. That, at any rate, is how Kogan plays it, although since he chooses the old-fashioned edition he might have given us rather more of the old-fashioned Schmalz. The piano accompaniment sounds dull, and is shallow in tone. The Vivaldi concerto has a martial allegro, a slow movement that may remind one of the corresponding one in Bach's E major violin concerto, and a closing allegro in triple time. It is already available on a disc devoted to Vivaldi violin concertos (Vanguard PVL 7018). Why, I wonder, did Barchet have to orchestrate it? Answer: to do away with harpsichord continuo. So it sounds beautiful but nondescript in this version.

There are some points in favour of Kogan's reading of Tchaikovsky's concerto,

one being his debonair account of the first tune in the finale. But there are points against it—shaky ensemble, backward woodwind solos, Kogan's rhythm in the second tune of the finale, loss of definition towards the end, and cuts—but cuts are usually adopted in this concerto. M.M. recommends Ferras's version; I still favour Campoli/Decca. It may seem an extravagant investment, but you get the whole work and, with it, an attention to detail and to beautiful music-making that are worth admiring. Is it cranky to regard Tchaikovsky's fiddle concerto as something more than a vehicle for virtuoso wizardry? W.S.M.

MENDELSSOHN. Symphonies. No. 3 in A minor, Op. 56, "Scotch"; No. 4 in A major, Op. 90, "Italian". **Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra** conducted by **Sir Adrian Boult**. Nixa NCL16005 (12 in., 39s. 11d.).

This is the most sensible way to collect Mendelssohn's symphonies—for the ordinary collector at least. The two that ought to be in any self-respecting library are these two, and at last they are able to be coupled together. True, the *Scotch* is rather hurried along, with a loss of graciousness and mystery to the slow movement; but the repeat of the first exposition is observed in the *Italian*, thus giving a proper balance to the movement, and also including some beautiful music that is usually lost in performance. We don't automatically con-

nect Sir Adrian with Mendelssohn, but it turns out that he is an appreciative and penetrating interpreter of these lovely (and extremely interesting) symphonies.

It is in phrasing and articulation that his performances score: in the prologue and epilogue of *Scotch I* and the second subject of IV, in the sympathetic lilt of *Italian II*, and the friendly tunes of III (taken at a steady tempo as in the delightful Beecham disc, at present resting from availability). The orchestral playing is not by any means brilliant, but gives much pleasure. The recording needs treble boost and deteriorates towards the end of each side; try the last chord of the *Scotch* to make sure—it is flat in my copy.

I dealt with the various Scotches last month; of the Italians, Cantelli is probably the most satisfying, until the Beecham returns to circulation. But as a coupling this is very recommendable. W.S.M.

MOZART. Symphonies. No. 32 in G major, K.318; No. 35 in D major, K.385, "Haffner"; No. 36 in C major, K.425, "Linz". **Pro Musica Symphony Orchestra, Vienna**, conducted by **Jonel Perlea**. Vox PL10140 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

This record is spoiled by bathroom acoustics which fill every available rest with echoes of the preceding chord and make a smudge out of all quick passages in the bass register. To be fair, I think the engineers have tried to minimise the effects of an over-resonant hall by placing the microphone(s) rather close, but in spite of this the result is simply not appropriate to Mozart. And unfortunately there is nothing so outstanding about the performances as to persuade us to ignore the quality of the recording. The competition as regards different versions of Mozart symphonies has long been too keen for us to recommend good routine performances, and that is what these are. J.N.

RACHMANINOV. Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27. Radio Symphony Orchestra of the U.S.S.R. conducted by **Alexander Gauk**. Parlophone PMA1038 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).
Pittsburgh S.O., Steinberg (6/55) CTL7085
Leningrad P.O., Sanderling (11/56) DGM18327
L.P.O., Boulton (10/57) RB16026

My last recommendation of a recording of this symphony was Steinberg, largely because his reading brings out the strength of the work rather than its weaknesses. I still think this is true but I have to confess that further hearings have made me admire Sanderling more and more. I had thought that he went over far in the way of emotional rubato but I cannot but admit that his performance is masterly (and with the most wonderful orchestral playing).

All this leads me to the latest Russian performance which is in the same class as Sanderling, both in manner of interpretation and in excellence of orchestral playing. It is a reading in the same manner and there is very little indeed to choose between the two.

If I were forced to make a decision I think I would go for Sanderling for a few,

comparatively small, reasons. I do prefer his slower, yet more dynamic and pointed, performance of the last movement and I think he handles its big tune better. For the rest, there is nothing in it between conductors and orchestras (unless you detest a very French-sounding horn at the end of Gauk's third movement).

There is a bit more in it between the recordings, for Deutsche Grammophon's is clearer. This new Parlophone is blessed with a perfect surface but it has more resonance and too much for comfort at some points—at the *fugato* in the second movement, for instance, where a clean texture is really wanted. My copy had a touch of pre-echo before this episode began: and the resonance of the symphony's final chord is cut off too abruptly.

Small points, you will observe. This is undoubtedly another wonderful performance of the symphony. T.H.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV. Capriccio Espagnole, Op. 34. Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by **Jean Fournet**. Philips ABE10050 (7 in., 15s. 3½d.).

This is an average sort of performance and recording, but not of the class which leaves you gasping at the orchestra's and conductor's brilliance. Its big interpretative weakness is the so-called Variations movement, stiff and dull to a degree and with nothing remotely Spanish-languorous about it. The rest is fairly lively, though it nowhere gets further than efficiency and lacks the panache the work really needs.

The recording is well balanced and clear but, like the performance, it misses the ultimate touch of brilliance. T.H.

SIBELIUS. Karelia Suite, Op. 11. The Swan of Tuonela, Op. 22, No. 3 (cor anglais solo: Leonard Brain). **En Saga, Op. 9. Romance in C major, Op. 42. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Anthony Collins**. H.M.V. ALP1578 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

The collective title is "Early Masterpieces by Sibelius", at which one might only grumble that the C major *Romance* is neither strictly early (it was written at the same time as the first symphony when Sibelius was in his middle thirties) nor a hall-marked masterpiece; I find it a dreary little morsel.

Nevertheless the disc makes a good investment for the new Sibelius collector who doesn't, for one reason or another, want the symphonies. It also makes a convenient appendage to Anthony Collins's other Sibelius records; he's done the *Karelia* overture but not the subsequent suite. This isn't as you might expect incidental music to a play, but a musical souvenir of a particular part of Finland where the people are remarkable by Finnish standards for their vivacity and friendliness. The intermezzo, which might be likened to a forest procession of riders approaching gradually through the overhanging leaves, and the *Alla Marcia* with its two bonhomous tunes, are both well known and often played. The

intervening *Ballad* doesn't seem to have been recorded before; it's a long, gaunt composition, which extends and gradually elaborates a very Sibelian (but surely not Karelian?) melody; the ballad is scored mostly for strings. Collins builds up the climaxes well in the outer pieces, and conveys the impressiveness of the ballad: the rhythm of the march is not quite as lively as one might wish.

The other pieces are all otherwise available. Collins's version of the famous *Swan*, gliding in majesty round the Scandinavian Styx, is finely done, with admirable recorded presence; the percussion and the string patterns emerge with wonderful clarity, and Leonard Brain plays his celebrated solo with real artistry. But this piece is also very well done on a disc that includes all four of Sibelius's *Legends* (Decca LXT2831) and the *Swan* is detached on a medium-play disc together with Lemminkainen's *Return* for those who can't afford all four pieces. The *Romance* is included in a Scandinavian free-for-all (Parlophone PMC1021) that also contains some jolly music by Svendsen and Alfvén; the new version is decently played, but doesn't suggest a masterpiece as, say, Beecham might. *En Saga*, on the other hand, is both early and a surefire masterpiece, vividly evocative in mood and built up with a consistency of symphonic logic hardly less remarkable than the symphonies which were to follow later. Again Collins obtains very clear string detail and balance of timbres (which becomes fairly complicated as the poem progresses), and the crescendi and climaxes are invigoratingly handled. But the orchestral ensemble isn't perfect all the time, and the jiggety tune sounds prim because it's fustily phrased; in the passage with four solo violins the stopped horn is really too faint, and users of small gramophones might not be able to hear it at all. Simply for the sake of *En Saga* I would go for Van Beinum's version (Decca LXT2776), coupled with *Tapiola*. But where four pieces are concerned, one not otherwise available, comparison doesn't necessarily mean everything. W.S.M.

SCHUBERT. Symphony No. 8 in B minor, "Unfinished". Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by **Eduard van Beinum**. Philips GBR6502 (10 in., 27s. 10d.).

I enjoyed this very much. And that is something to say of yet another new recording of the *Unfinished*. Van Beinum is a conductor of whom I don't normally expect some blinding new revelation (nor do I want it in this work) but I do always expect from him a thoroughly musical interpretation, faithful to the score, and at the same time, sensitive: and that is what he gives us here.

If you want the *Unfinished* played by a conductor who cherishes every semiquaver in the first movement, then you had better choose one of those Teutonic slow-motion specialists—Boehm, for instance. Van Beinum plays the first movement *allegro*, the second is *con moto*, as requested. It is all flowing and moving on, yet never

LEONID KOOGAN

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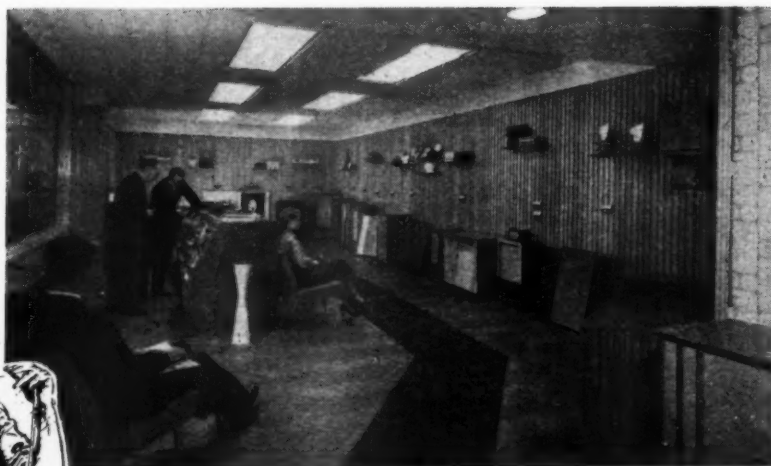


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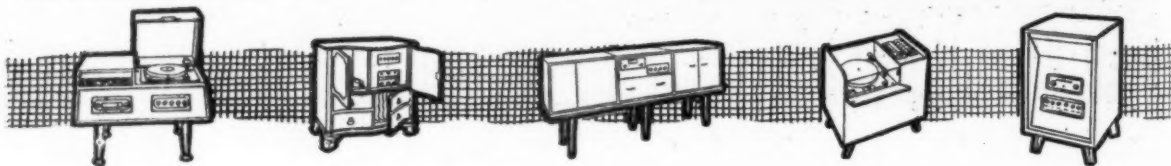
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hurried. The repeat in the first movement is observed.

The recording is notable for the admirable reproduction of the double-basses in the opening bars and later, and is only slightly spoiled by a faint touch of pre-echo before one or two of the *ff* outbursts.

Since this is also even cheaper than Philips' normal 10-inch price it is quite clearly to be recommended on all counts.

T.H.

TCHAIKOVSKY. Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23. Van Cliburn (piano) with Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. R.C.A. RB16073 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

The first International Tchaikovsky competition took place in Moscow last April. The sessions were held in public, and when in the finals the Texan (6 ft. 4 in.) Van Cliburn had finished, "the crowd went wild, chanting in unison, 'First-prize! First-prize!' for their adored favourite, who by now had become universally known as 'Vanyusha' or 'Ványitchka'". So the sleeve-note. Nevertheless the judges still felt able to award Ványitchka the first prize, and recognition tempered with ecstasy followed immediately in London and New York.

Van Cliburn's recorded performance of the concerto is a very good one. He certainly brings enormous power to the many sections of the music which respond readily to it, yet is happily content to keep the power in reserve elsewhere. Always he phrases effectively, and always a faultless technique allows an agreeable delicacy in figuration. The anonymous orchestra, too, play well; grounds of style as well as of probability suggest that it is an American one. Kondrashin and Van Cliburn shape the music well, and not by any means only with the requirements of virtuoso pianism in mind; some passages indeed are taken rather more deliberately than is customary (and are the gainers from it).

The recording is well balanced, but somewhat harsh in tone. The piano, in particular, is affected; at its louder moments the clang can become unpleasant (it does so in the octave run-up to the final peroration). R.C.A. sleeves are seldom noticeable for their modesty; this one might have done well not to add to the usual "Orthophonic" puff, to which we are by now nearly acclimatised, an extra and actively misleading one about the disc's stereophonic adaptability.

M.M.

WAGNER. Die Meistersinger. Preludes to Acts 1 and 3: Dance of the Apprentices: Procession of the Meistersingers. *Die Götterdämmerung.* Siegfried's Funeral Music: Siegfried's Rhine Journey. *Die Walküre.* Magic Fire Music. London Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski. Nixa WLP20024 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

In the last six months I see there have been at least six new records of Wagner gobbets, and although I have not heard all

of them I should think this one would come fairly high on the list. The orchestral playing is good, the quality of recorded sound excellent, and Rodzinski's direction spirited. What prevents me from feeling that it is entirely satisfactory is a lack of breadth that seems characteristic of this conductor's work. This is not simply a matter of pace, although Rodzinski's tempi are generally on the fast side. Sometimes, in fact, this is an advantage; the prelude to the Third Act of *Meistersinger* doesn't bog down here as it so often does. But although I am far from wanting everything to be taken at a snail's pace, I do feel that, for example, the Mastersingers' processional entry and Wotan's summoning of Loge need to be given just a little more majesty. They need to be less hurried and (still more important) phrased right through the melody. The final impression left by the record is that Rodzinski thinks of this music as a set of orchestral war-horses (though not necessarily jaded ones) rather than as parts of larger structures. People who know the complete operas are therefore likely to find this record more disappointing than others less well acquainted with the music. J.N.

AARON ROSAND. Poème, Op. 25 (Chausson). *Tzigane* (Ravel). *Rêverie and Caprice, Op. 8* (Berlioz). *Havanaise, Op. 83: Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28* (Saint-Saëns), Aaron Rosand (violin), Südwestfunk Orchestra, Baden-Baden, conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. Vox PL10470 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

I can't help wondering whether the Saint-Saëns pieces were recorded at a different session from the others, because they are certainly the best things on this disc. Although the balance is not perfect the violinist is at a more reasonable distance from the microphone, and he also seems to me to be on better form—more relaxed, and with better control over his bowing and his vibrato. I came to these two pieces (the *Havanaise* and the *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*) last, and they compelled me to modify the rather unfavourable impression I had so far formed of Rosand's playing. He has a very considerable technique and he is evidently capable of playing with wit and refinement on occasion. Unfortunately the former quality isn't enough in evidence in his performance of the Berlioz *Rêverie*, nor the latter in Ravel's maliciously pointed *Tzigane*. But on playing through these pieces again I'm inclined to think it is above all the poor balance that fails to do justice to his playing, making him sound as though he were always playing too loud. It seems all the more sad that Vox should permit this when they have an orchestra as good as the Südwestfunk providing the accompaniments; they're not perhaps the obvious choice for a record of French music, but they are a fine group of players as anyone who has listened to their recent Schoenberg record will remember.

If you can discount the unfocused orchestral sound, this record has a good deal to offer, including a Berlioz work (albeit a rather insignificant one) that doesn't appear

in the record catalogues. Whether or not it will eclipse memories of Ferras or Grumiaux in the Chausson *Poème* or in *Tzigane*, or of Heifetz in the Saint-Saëns pieces, it is at least a very promising début.

J.N.

CHAMBER MUSIC

BACH. Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major. Basle Chamber Orchestra conducted by Paul Sacher. Philips ABE10058 (7 in., 15s. 3½d.).

How odd that the city of Basle should, by means of its excellent musicians, produce two recordings of Bach's Brandenburg No. 3, and both on 45 r.p.m. extended play discs. Hard on the heels of the performance by the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, conducted by Wenzinger, comes this new one by the Basle Chamber Orchestra and Sacher. It is well recorded, and good value for money, since the "missing" slow movement is replaced—very effectively—by a short movement played by the harpsichord alone. Well, nearly alone, for the last two chords fit the two isolated orchestral chords like a glove, and the lead-in to the finale is very natural and convincing. The strings are excellent in their tricky passage-work, though perhaps a shade dry elsewhere. However, tempi are good, and there is a very satisfactory balance between orchestra and harpsichord.

D.S.

BACH. Partita for solo violin, No. 2 in D minor, BWV1004—Chaconne only.

FIOCO. (a) Suite No. 1 in G major—Allegro only.

MOZART. (b) Violin Sonatas: No. 18 in G major; K.301; No. 21 in E minor, K.304. Arthur Grumiaux (violin) with (a) and (b) Gregory Tucker (piano). Argo RG109 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Arthur Grumiaux is the Belgian violinist currently featured in the Beethoven sonatas with Clara Haskil on the Philips label. Like Menuhin, he is a pupil of Georges Enesco. Argo have teamed him with an American pianist of distinction, Gregory Tucker, and but for one thing the record would be an unqualified success. The trouble, and it is one you to some extent get used to, is the balance. The two players sound distant, cold and lonely in what sounds like a very large hall. These very fine performances lack immediacy. This matters least in the Bach *Chaconne*, which can stand a certain remoteness. Grumiaux plays this transcendental music with introspective lyricism and no fuss. There are many possible ways of interpreting this music, but few more satisfying than this one. Possibly he splits the piece too obviously into three sections, pausing too long for my taste at the two changes of key, but this is a small detail in a beautiful and poetic performance. In the Fiocco he is joined by the pianist; it sounds very small beer after the Bach. On the other side there is room for two of Mozart's

shorter violin sonatas. Each has two movements only, and in each case the disc offers no repeats in the first movement. The G major (inadvertently described as in E minor on the label) is given a stylish and happy performance, with no straining after effect. The E minor is equally successful, and the players avoid the temptation into which so many have fallen of overdoing the "Sturm und Drang". This is the only violin sonata by Mozart in a minor key, and it is certainly more passionate than most, yet it is still small in scale, and the sort of vehement approach that may work in the "Kreutzer" sonata kills this one stone dead. Grumiaux and Tucker judge its scale and emotional content to a nicety.

The record seems to me a little lacking in bass, but this may be due to the balance. It is commendably free from surface noise.

R.F.

BACH. Sonata in E major for flute and clavier, BWV1035. Poul Bircklund (flute), Hans Erik Deckert (viola da gamba), Liselotte Selbiger (cembalo). H.M.V. 7EB6035 (7 in., 11s. 10d.).

"Cembalo" in the context means harpsichord; and I would guess, too, that the flautist joins his partners in the quest of historical authenticity by using an old flute, or a new one made to an old design: his tone is hollower than is now the fashion.

He plays very well, with shape and continuity—not always so easy for a solo wind-player essaying Bach, who had a superb contempt for the limitations of human lungs. The flute, actually, is everywhere afforded the spotlight, partly by the nature of the music, partly by the recording. The two continuo players are content to provide an effective background without any more flights of fancy in the realisation of the keyboard part than are compelled by one incomprehensible three bars' mercy Bach has on the flautist; and they are balanced accordingly. In this respect the recording matches the music; and it does so, too, in its clarity. This could be a very useful disc indeed for the buyer who would like one Bach flute sonata in his library but quails before the prospect of six. M.M.

BACH. Three sonatas for viola da gamba and harpsichord. No. 1 in G major, BWV1027; No. 2 in D major, BWV1028; No. 3 in G minor, BWV1029. Desmond Dupré (viola da gamba), Thurston Dart (harpsichord). London L'Oiseau-Lyre OL50161 (12 in., 39s. 11d.).

J. Scholz, E. Giordani-Sartori (12/55) PL9010
Wenzinger, Neumeyer (1/57) APM14009

On the Vox recording you hear these sonatas at their present-day pitch. D.G.G. Archive gave us everything a semitone down, in other words at something like the pitch Bach would have known and used. Now comes Oiseau-Lyre with normal pitch once more, so the final choice depends rather on how sensitive your ears are.

In some ways the balance of the two instruments is best on the Vox disc: that is, both can be heard at the same time and neither unduly ousts the other. The trouble

is that the overall effect is rather woolly and distant, as if there were a blanket between musicians and microphone, and some of the characteristic "edge" of both gamba and harpsichord is lacking. The D.G.G. disc is well balanced, though now and again Wenzinger tends to disappear beneath the superior weight of Neumeyer and Neupert. This happens rather noticeably at the beginning of the fourth movement in the G major sonata. Oiseau-Lyre brings both instruments to the fore, and all their best characteristics are audible. Sometimes the twin sonorities tend to cancel each other out, so rich are they, and what ought to be transparent is obscured by the "close" sound of the recording. Played back at a low level, however, this effect is minimised, and for many this new disc will present the most satisfactory balance of all.

Scholz is a fine technician, but does not fully exploit the expressive qualities of the gamba. Wenzinger, a superb player, has a mellow and pleasing tone, plus a sense of style that is more than adequate. Dupré wears his soloist's mantle less easily than the other two players do, but he phrases beautifully and his approach is intensely musical. I like the way he develops tone on a long note, where Scholz merely trills; and I enjoyed the pizzicato touch in the last movement of the D major sonata. There are no violent differences in tempi between the three gamba players. The real difference is in balance and recording, as well as in the tonal variations of the instruments concerned. Of the three harpsichordists, Dart is decidedly the most musical, and his registration is colourful without being over-subtle. Musically the G major (arranged by Bach from a sonata for two flutes and continuo) and the G minor are the best works, with the D major a not-so-good runner-up. In the first two sonatas, Oiseau-Lyre has scrolled the movements in twos; Vox and D.G.G. have all movements together on one band, except at the change of side which occurs half-way through the D major sonata. D.S.

BEETHOVEN. Quintet in E flat major, Op. 16.

MOZART. Quintet in E flat major, K.425. Rudolph Serkin (piano) with members of the Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet (John de Lancie, Anthony Gigliotti, Sol Schoenbach, Mason Jones). Philips ABL3187 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

Coupled as above:
Gieseking, Phils. Wind Quartet (1/56) 33CX1322
Beethoven Quintet:
d'Arco, Peirlot, Lancelot, Coursier, Hongne (11/54) OL50033

Mozart Quintet:
Veyron-Lacroix, French Woodwind Quintet (2/54) OL50016
L. Brain, S. Waters, D. Brain, C. James, C. Horsley (2/55) CLP1029
Panhoffer, Vienna Octet (5/57) LXT5293

Rudolf Serkin's fine, alert piano-playing is matched by some good wind-playing on the part of the Philadelphia Quintet: a stylish oboe, sounding somewhat hard in remorseless extension over the leadership of two large-scale works in that he chooses not to ease the situation with any vibrato; a fluent clarinet; a particularly gracious bassoon, with a style ideal for chamber

music; and some very clear horn-playing with occasional romantic moments—in the slow movement of the Beethoven very happily, in the slow introduction to the Mozart perhaps less so.

These virtues are perfectly integrated into stylish performances, though a generosity of repeat-making does make the Mozart seem a little long-winded. The integration is helped substantially by an ideal balance in the recording, both between the wind themselves and between the wind and piano. In other respects, however, the recording is less happy. The general tone lacks some degree of both presence and fullness in comparison with the very best, and it is often overlaid by a rather heavy background. This is particularly the case at the start of the Beethoven; and here, too, some curious accident gives the effect of a number of the players missing the important initial demisiquaver.

I do believe the question of the style of oboe lead to be a crucial one. It is at least arguable that in all wind chamber music some rather greater degree of vibrato is necessary, to relieve the listener's ear, than it is in music where the steadiness and solidity of wind tone can be combined and alternated with the comparative warmth of string tone. The oboe in particular has, basically, an intentionally somewhat acid sound; where it leads the music for any length of time I am quite sure that for humanity's sake its bite simply must, save in an exceptional passage, be tempered.

Partly on these grounds, and partly on considerations of recording, I would suggest that the Columbia coupling of these Mozart and Beethoven quintets listed above might well be preferred to the new issue. In the case of the Mozart Quintet there is a further strong competitor: the H.M.V. disc, offering on its reverse Lennox Berkeley's fine Trio for Violin, Horn, and Piano. M.M.

HAYDN. String Quartets, Op. 76: No. 1 in G major; No. 2 in D minor. Budapest String Quartet. Philips ABR4050 (10 in., 30s. 11d.).

The six quartets that comprise his Opus 76 were written by Haydn in old age and they are contemporary with Beethoven's Opus 18 set. It is a pleasure to welcome the G major which has not been in the catalogue for some years. It starts with a 'cello solo that must have been unconsciously in Beethoven's mind when he wrote his A major 'cello sonata, contains a minuet marked "presto" of the greatest good humour and originality, and ends with a powerful movement in a minor key (as does the famous "Emperor" quartet in this same set) and of far greater moment than the first movement. The D minor on the back has been recorded by both the Italian and, more recently, the Hungarian Quartets. It is perhaps an even finer work than the G major, though I am coming to feel that the famous minuet in canonic form has been overrated. The Budapest Quartet certainly make it sound rather dull, and earlier their intonation is not all it should be. They miss points here and there, and do not, I think, feel as much interest in Haydn as they do

PILLARS OF THE REPERTOIRE

MOZART

Piano Concerti No. 24 (K.491) and No. 26 (K.537)
Robert Casadesus (Piano)
Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Szell
ABL 3060

BEETHOVEN

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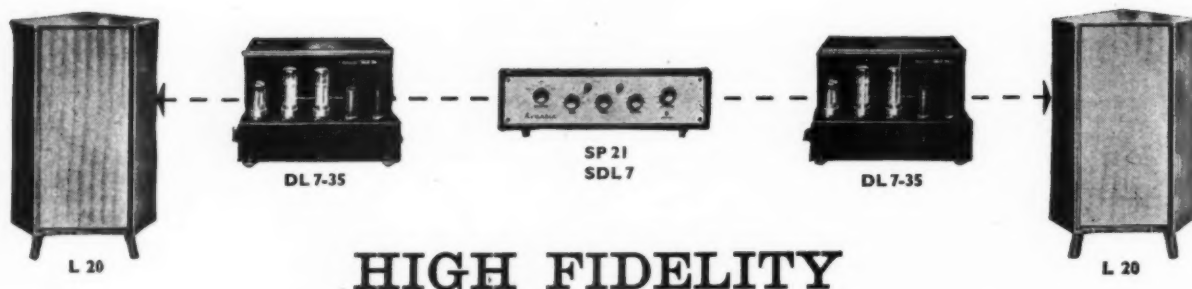
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in Beethoven. Nevertheless there is much to admire, notably in the two finales which are played with real fire. Furthermore this record, being smaller, is much cheaper than its rivals, and the quality is splendid.

R.F.

MARTINU. Violin Sonata No. 3.
Alexander Plocek (violin), **Josef Palenicek** (piano). Supraphon LPM 301 (10 in., 30s. 11d.).

Martinu wrote his Third Violin Sonata in 1944, at about the same time as the three books of *Etudes and Polkas* which pianists may know. It shares many turns of phrase with them—the simple harmonic texture (in which dissonances are very often caused by two superimposed triads), the cross-rhythms and the “motoric” use of continual quaver or semiquaver patterns. Unfortunately I don’t think that this material is as suitable to an extended work like a sonata as it is to short piano pieces. Ideas which may seem quite charming when you make their first acquaintance are allowed to outstay their welcome. I have never yet heard a work of Martinu which gave me the impression that he had any real gift for the musical development which we expect in a sonata or a symphony; on the other hand, I find the present work more likeable than the recent Sixth Symphony for the simple reason that it is so unpretentious—it makes no attempt to conceal its thinness by wrapping itself in rhetorical wool. Of the four movements the first is the one that strikes me as having the most to say, and I recommend anyone who is interested to listen to it and the finale before tackling the very dull slow movement.

The performance is excellent. Plocek and Palenicek do everything possible to convince us of the work’s value, playing each phrase with the understanding of real chamber-musicians. The recording is a little boxy by the best current standards, but not objectionably so; balance between violin and piano is above average. J.N.

MOZART. Oboe Quartet in F major K.370. Stanislav Duchon (oboe), **Vaclav Snitil** (violin), **Josef Kodoušek** (viola), **Victor Moucka** (cello). **Organ Sonatas, K. 67, 328, 336. Milan Slechta** (organ), **Josef Vlach** and **Vaclav Snitil** (violins), **Viktor Moucka** (cello). Supraphon LPM 320 (10 in., 30s. 11d.).

Oboe Quartet
Gomberg, Galimir Quartet (8/58) AXTL1021
Kamesch, Kamper, Weiss, Kwada (8/58) WLP5022
Stalljn, Klijn, Godwin, Boomkamp (1/57) ABE10012
Wieschermann, Kehr Trio (7/57) LGX60065

The music on this disc is all minor Mozart, but performed with a sort of vigorous affection that is very winning. I can’t quite understand the present craze for recording the organ sonatas; if Mozart ever relied on conventions to get him through a commissioned job it seems to me that he did with these little instrumental interludes for Salzburg Cathedral. It is interesting to hear them played, as they are here, by solo violins instead of a full string band, but problems of balance have not been com-

pletely solved; the two string-players sound a great deal closer than the organist.

But in any case the Oboe Quartet is what really matters, and that is very well played indeed. Modern listeners—and English ones in particular (conditioned by Goossens)—may find the oboe tone thin and reedy at first, but of course the oboe should sound like a reed instrument, and certainly did in Mozart’s day. Duchon and his companions play the music with real musicianship but without the rather exaggerated refinement of phrasing sometimes considered suitable. Altogether a very pleasing record, though perhaps the little 10-inch Philips record listed above is a better buy for anyone who wants just the Oboe Quartet, since it is better recorded as well as cheaper. J.N.

PURCELL. Ten Sonatas in four parts (1697). (a) Pavan for three violins and continuo. (b) Fantasia, Three parts on a Ground. Jacobean Ensemble (Neville Marriner, Peter Gibbs, Desmond Dupré, Thurston Dart) with (a) and (b) **Carl Pini** (violin). Argo RG112 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

I am glad to see that Argo’s recording (with this ensemble) of Purcell’s 1683 set of sonatas has been awarded a Grand Prix du Disque by the Académie Charles Cros. Even if one finds some details of the Jacobean Ensemble’s style unconvincing—and I remember that D.S. did, in his review of that set for THE GRAMOPHONE in December 1956—it possesses the overriding virtue of being a real chamber-music style. Thurston Dart and his string players do not play this music as if they were trying to impress a hall full of possibly bored listeners; they play as if for themselves. I see that Professor Westrup in his invaluable book on Purcell (Dent, in the Master Musicians series) says: “The truth is that the trio sonata was primarily chamber music, not a vehicle for the virtuoso’s skill.” He also points out that the break in style between the fantasias Purcell wrote for viol consort and these trio sonatas is a largely superficial one. I have myself been guilty of over-emphasising the influence of the new Italian style in these sonatas; in fact the present performance has convinced me that they are very nearly as introverted as the viol works themselves. Their harmonic language is full of those chromatic subtleties that the young Purcell revelled in—subtleties which would simply not make their full impact in a large hall. In relation to this it is interesting to note that the “Golden Sonata” (No. IX), which is by far the best known of the 1697 set today, is also one of the simplest and least Purcellian in its harmonic language.

The 1697 set of sonatas was published posthumously by Purcell’s widow, obviously from manuscript copies which the composer had not prepared for publication. It has generally been assumed that these ten sonatas are later in date than the set of twelve that Purcell had published himself in 1683, though as far as I know no-one has done a sufficiently detailed comparative study of the two sets to confirm this on

stylistic grounds. In his sleeve-note to the present recording, Thurston Dart makes the interesting and very plausible suggestion that the ten sonatas of the 1697 set were for the most part composed at the same date as the others—namely in the early 1680’s. This is certainly borne out by the harmonic style that I have already mentioned, since Purcell’s harmony tended to crystallise into a clearer diatonic language in his later years. If this is so it means that all Purcell’s surviving chamber music dates from before his twenty-fifth year, and that his later preoccupation with the theatre was even more complete than we had previously realised.

If I made no detailed criticisms of the performances on these records I suppose that uncharitable readers (if there be any) might assume I had only read the sleeve, so I had better mention that in certain movements the Jacobean Ensemble goes a little too far in its determination to avoid dull, slow tempi: the *canzona* in No. I, the opening *adagio* of No. IV, the *canzona* again of No. VII are cases in point. Sometimes, too, the carefully cultivated *sotto voce* effect relaxes the rhythm just a little too much; the last movement of No. III is taken so quietly and gently that the final bars, marked *grave*, come as a shock. And in general the recording could have presented us with a little more of the bass viol’s characteristically edgy tone; in several of the sonatas we could have done with a more clearly defined bass. But these are minor blemishes on a first-rate set. The music itself may be a little more uneven than that of the 1683 set, but the performance could hardly be better. No other group I know of can recapture so successfully the rhythmic conventions of seventeenth-century performance. Argo and the Jacobean Ensemble are to be congratulated on doing justice to music that deserves to be better known. J.N.

SHOSTAKOVITCH. String Quartet No. 3, Op. 73. Tchaikovsky Quartet (Y. Sitkovetsky, A. Sharoyev, violins; R. Barshai, viola; Y. Slobodkin, cello). **Piano Quintet, Op. 57. Dimitri Shostakovich** (piano), **Beethoven Quartet** (D. Tsiganov, V. Shirinsky, violins; V. Borisovsky, viola; S. Shirinsky, cello). Parlophone PMA1040 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Piano Quintet:
Quintetto Chigiano (12/52) LXT249

Shostakovich’s Piano Quintet is surely the most beautiful composition to come from Soviet Russia. Composed in 1940, it won a Stalin Prize in its own country and then captivated the West. With the deepest enjoyment I listened again to the noble Prelude, the broad, slow and engrossing Fugue, the unaffectedly gay Scherzo, deeply lyrical Intermezzo and sparkling Finale. On this new record it is played by its original interpreters, the composer and the Beethoven Quartet: an excellent Capitol disc (Aller/Hollywood Quartet) has been withdrawn, so the only comparison is with the Decca version. In every movement, but particularly in the Scherzo and Finale, the Russians set a

slightly faster tempo than the Italians—without yielding anything in lyrical feeling to them. Their treatment of the Fugue in particular is more shapely; the Scherzo is sparkly and alert, the Intermezzo, with its melody unwound in Bachian manner over a steadily treading bass, more seriously beautiful. The recorded tone is a shade thin, perhaps, but pure and clear; while that of the Decca is richer but somewhat congested.

Beside the advantages of having the original interpreters, and of a more beautiful performance, there is a considerable one of economy. Both Decca and Capitol used two sides for the Quintet; on the new Parlophone it takes only one, and the other is given to the same composer's Third String Quartet (not in the Grove catalogue, though it was composed in 1946). It is hardly a work to be classed with the Piano Quintet, though not negligible; and even when Shostakovich is at his least rewarding, I find the sheer quality of his thinking, the way his musical mind moves, a source of pleasure and interest. The second movement of this Quartet was the first to be composed. It is a *moderato con moto*, and very much a "constructed" piece, over an ostinato bass motif. The first movement *allegretto*, is repetitive, and surprisingly Prokofiev-like in its materials, with a diatonic theme made piquant by "wrong-note" slips. The third movement, *allegro non troppo*, has a dramatic exclamatory opening, and there is about it a suggestion of "Cossack" or otherwise barbaric rhythms. But it is rather dry at the same time. We have to wait until the fourth movement, after a recitative declamation, to discover the lyrical Shostakovich: this is a grave, long and low-toned section, which then returns after the official Finale, again an extrovert piece whose theme might have come from Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*. This side is admirably recorded. The record is a thoroughly worth-while addition to any library that at present lacks the Piano Quintet. A.P.

INSTRUMENTAL

BARTOK. Mikrokosmos: Vol. 5, Nos. 122, 124, 125, 126, 128, 130, 131, 133, 135, 136, 138, 139; Vol. 6, Nos. 140, 141, 142, 143, 146. **Suite, Op. 14. Danses Populaires Roumaines. Pour les Enfants:** Vol. 1, Nos. 4, 5, 10, 11, 14, 15, 22, 23, 31, 34, 35, 36, 38, 40. **George Solchany** (piano). Columbia 33CX1547 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Mikrokosmos was intended largely to serve something of a didactic purpose, addressed both to pianists and composers; it is in no way belittling the extensive work to suggest that as listening material it may be felt to have its limitations. In avoiding, so far, a complete recording the gramophone has perhaps sensed this. Certainly, however, choosing selectively from the later books can have its rewards.

Solchany chooses primarily pieces of percussive tendencies (there is no shortage

of supply), and he gives to them a substantial degree of attack, seeming sometimes less enthusiastic only about the rarer moments of lyrical contrast. Attack is the word, too, to use in describing the performance of the Op. 14 Suite; the third movement of this is quite electrifying. The *Roumanian Popular Dances* continue in the same rewarding vein; and in so far as the style is applicable the *Children's Pieces*, too, are projected effectively.

The recording matches the playing, concentrating on brilliance rather than richness or smoothness. Both, most of the time, match the music. M.M.

BRUHNS. Prelude and Fugue in G major. Fantasia: "Nun komm der Heiden Heiland". **Prelude and Fugue in E minor.**

LÜBECK. Prelude and Fugue in E major. Partita: "Nun lasst uns Gott dem Herren". **Prelude and Fugue in F major. Prelude and Fugue in D minor. Hans Heintze** (organ). D.G.G. Archive APM14081 (12 in., 41s. 9d.). Recorded at St. John's Church, Lüneburg.

Lip service had long been paid to the great North German organ school half a century before Bach's time, yet the catalogues contained not a single example of the music of Nikolaus Bruhns (c. 1665-1697) or of Vincenz Lübeck the Elder (1654-1740) before the arrival of this enterprising Archive disc. There is not even a snippet of these composers' works, or of Reinken's, in the *History of Music in Sound*, though there is absolutely no doubt that without these men, without Pachelbel and Buxtehude, Bach's organ music would not have reached the peaks that it did.

This disc has been well planned and expertly recorded, and consequently it makes for good listening. The fine sound of the Johanniskirche organ, as well as the "atmosphere" of the church itself, has been recaptured with a considerable degree of success. Hans Heintze is a capable and stylish player, and his registration has variety without being in any way fussy or over-clever. Only once (in the Bruhns *Fantasia*) did I feel that mutations were so drowning fundamental tone as to obscure the shape of a melodic phrase or alter the written harmony. Apart from this instance, the sound is fascinating and clear as a bell; indeed some of the stops, when combined, remind one of pealing silver bells, a well-known characteristic of certain German organs and an effect that is beautiful enough to tempt abuse. But Heintze has taste as well as technique, and his performances of these old German masterpieces can be enjoyed for what they are.

No index card arrived with my discs, and in view of the absence of information readers may wish to place these two composers in their proper perspective. Bruhns was a native of Schwabstadt in Schleswig, and was taught by his father and brother to play the violin and viola da gamba. He was noted for his skill in playing sonorous double-stops and chords on the violin, and

this principle he applied to the organ when he studied the instrument as a youth, and later as a pupil of Buxtehude. But the organ "double-stops" were achieved by the use of both feet on the pedal board at the same time. Bruhns did not, however, invent this idea, for it was known (if not widely practised) centuries before his time. In a mid-fifteenth-century organ tablature, now in Philadelphia, there is an example of two pedal notes being played at one and the same time. The result of this special technique is, of course, to increase sonority and depth, and it is pleasant to be able to report on the success with which this effect is used in the present recording.

You can hear a great many of Bach's favourite figurations in the music of Bruhns, which is available, by the way, in a fine edition by Fritz Stein. There is noble breadth and splendour in the great G major Prelude and Fugue, and some hair-raising pedal passages appear from time to time as a reminder that Bruhns was an expert in dexterity (that is to say pediferous dexterity, if I may be allowed a contradiction in terms) as well as in sonority. The *Fantasia on Nun komm der Heiden Heiland* shows great skill in decorating and varying a chorale melody, while the short Prelude and Fugue in E minor is notable for its cavalier treatment of fugal form. Just as the Fugue gets going, Bruhns seems to throw up his hands and exclaim, "Enough of this counterpoint: let's make the organ-blower work for his living". Accordingly down go both hands, not to mention both feet, out pops every stop, and we have a magnificent needle-shaking treat that might have been expressly designed to titillate the hi-fi spines of today.

Lübeck is no less interesting as a man and musician. Even if he did not actually study under Buxtehude with the same assiduity as Bruhns, he came under the influence of Buxtehude. His main teacher was Reinken, who lived to the ripe age of 99. When Bach came to Hamburg to hear Reinken he also heard Lübeck, then organist at the Church of St. Nicholas, a post which he held until his death in 1740. Although Lübeck wrote much organ music, it remained in manuscript (as was the custom, since the printing of organ music rarely justified the expense) and only a handful of pieces has been preserved. These were edited by Gottlieb Harms in 1921, which year also saw the appearance of an important study devoted to Lübeck's life and works.

In Lübeck's music, as in that of Bruhns, there is much contrast in style and size of canvas. At one extreme is the cheerful little Prelude and Fugue in F, not very far removed structurally from Bach's Short Preludes and Fugues, while at the other extreme we have the Prelude and Fugue in D minor, massive, almost ponderous, yet still clinging to a canzona-like theme for its impressively majestic fugue, reminiscent sometimes of Pachelbel at his most fiery, or even Bach in his most expansive and inventive vein. No lover of organ music, or of baroque music in general, should miss this record. D.S.

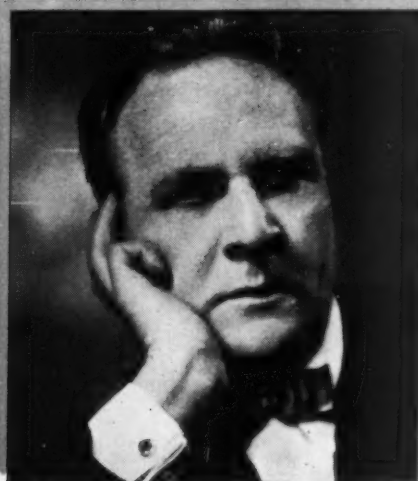
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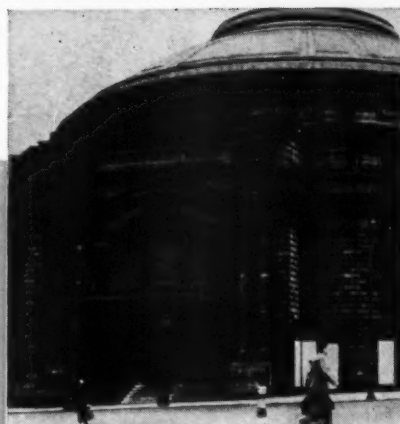
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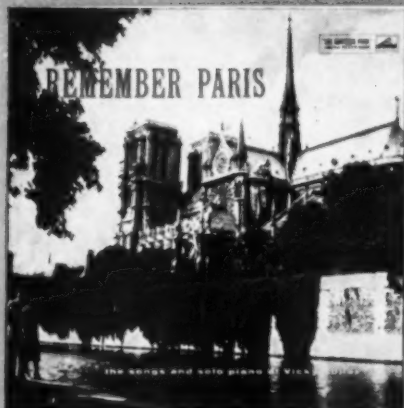


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BRAHMS. Sixteen Waltzes, Op. 39.
SCRIABIN. Twenty-four Preludes,
Op. 11. Gina Bachauer (piano).
 H.M.V. CLP1173 (12 in., 35s. 10d.).

Sixteen Waltzes:

(6/54) LW5109

This is the first full recording of Scriabin's Op. 11 Preludes, so strongly influenced by Chopin that they even follow the same key-sequence as the earlier master's set of twenty-four Preludes. In view of the scarcity of Scriabin performances today, we should be grateful for this opportunity of hearing one of the most appealing and least neurotic of his works, whose caprices Gina Bachauer admirably captures. Her playing is an object-lesson in achieving elasticity without falling into exaggerated rubato. The recording she receives is certainly better than the hard clangy tone in Horowitz's record (H.M.V. ALP1429) of a mixed bag of Scriabin, but it is rather too reverberant, and the fine fury of the playing in the tempestuous No. 14 and in No. 18 here is clouded by the acoustics. There are slight extraneous sounds, too, in No. 4 and elsewhere as if the microphone were being bumped. Perhaps it is the recording which helps to make No. 7 louder than it should be; but the agitated feeling of No. 3 (just too fast, to my mind), contrasting with the cool delicacy of Horowitz's interpretation, must be of Mme Bachauer's choice. On the other hand, how beautifully lucid is her playing of the flowing No. 23!

Her Brahms Waltzes are more up and down: temperamentally and stylistically she seems less at home here. These are—understandably—less idiomatically Viennese than Robert Weisz's performances, which had fantasy, lightness and flexibility, and which, despite his faults, made one feel that he loved the pieces. Mme Bachauer is better in the direct and forceful (as in No. 13) than in the dreamy and poetic waltzes. Sometimes indeed (as in No. 5) she is entirely matter-of-fact. Yet she can be brilliant (in the cross-rhythmic No. 6), can be admirable in her shaping (No. 12), and is certainly simpler and tidier in the famous A flat waltz (No. 15) than her competitor. The recording is very bright and rather clangy. L.S.

MOZART. Sonata No. 15 in C major,
K.545. Fantasia in D minor, K.397.
Rondo alla Turca from Sonata No. 11
 in A major, K.331. **Julius Katchen**
 (piano). Decca CEP528 (7 in., 15s. 3d.).

This is one of the "Decca Forty-Five" I wrote about last month, but since all the material it contains is new, not reissued from earlier versions, it deserves separate review. Katchen gives a beautiful account of the "Little Sonata for Beginners", playing the first movement with rare delicacy and finesse, and exquisite and imaginative tonal gradations between phrases. In some of the semiquaver runs the pace is "pushed", which only those who demand absolute steadiness of tempo could object to. The Andante is serene and thoughtful, and so a very successful account of a movement which, unimaginatively played, can seem very dull. The Allegretto is firm and full-

blooded. In this Sonata the pedalling is extremely light; but in the impressive performance of the D minor Fantasy there is a long (and debatable) pedal sustained though the closing bars of the preamble: personally I find this convincing. By treating the main part of the work as a true Adagio, not an Andante, Katchen makes it imposing and serious, brings it into the world of the B minor Adagio; while the artless Allegretto sounds extremely pretty, and much less trivial than usual. The *Rondo alla Turca* is taken at a spanking, exhilarating pace, with some heavy terminal accents. On the sonata side of the disc there is a slight surface background, but a clear full piano tone—evidently a grand piano which had been cleverly recorded so as to sound intimate. Surface noise increases on the other side, and there is a lack of crispness in the recording of the Rondo. The middle reaches sound rather fuzzy. A.P.

CHOPIN. Etudes, Op. 10: No. 1 in C major; No. 2 in A minor; No. 3 in E major; No. 4 in G sharp minor; No. 5 in G flat major; No. 6 in E flat minor; No. 7 in C major; No. 8 in F major; No. 9 in F minor; No. 10 in A flat major; No. 11 in E flat major; No. 12 in C minor. **Impromptus:** No. 1 in A flat major, Op. 29; No. 2 in F sharp major, Op. 36. **Ruth Slenczynska (piano).** Brunswick AXTL1084 (12 in., 39s. 11d.).

CHOPIN. Etudes, Op. 25: No. 1 in A flat major; No. 2 in F minor; No. 3 in F major; No. 4 in A minor; No. 5 in E minor; No. 6 in G sharp minor; No. 7 in C sharp minor; No. 8 in D flat major; No. 9 in G flat major; No. 10 in B minor; No. 11 in A minor; No. 12 in C minor. **Impromptus:** No. 3 in G flat major, Op. 51; No. 4 in C sharp minor, Op. 66. **Ruth Slenczynska (piano).** Brunswick AXTL1085 (12 in., 39s. 11d.).

Etudes complete:
 Cherkassky (2/56) ALP1310-1
 Arrau (6/57) 39CX1443-4
 Ellason (11/57) (7/57) CCT31002-3
 Novacek (7/53) PL7560 and (3/56) PL9070

I wish that the record companies would not put quite such blatant advertising material on their sleeves, and I wish, too, that I had not read what they have to say about Miss Slenczynska before listening to her records of the Chopin studies and impromptus. She was born, in California, in 1925; she gave her first concert at the age of four; she was hailed as a child prodigy; she "retired from active concert life" in 1939—at the tender age of fourteen, be it noted; since 1951 she has resumed her career and has apparently won excellent notices, some of which are quoted. All this, capped by a reference to her "glowing affinity for Chopin", made me think that these records might really provide us with playing which combined the technique of a child prodigy with the fresh approach of a young artist, but I was sadly disappointed.

The technique is there, to be sure—and a real masculine, muscular technique it is, too. But I can find no trace of any affinity with Chopin whatsoever, neither with the spirit nor the letter. To deal with the letter first:

Miss Slenczynska is extraordinarily high-handed with Chopin's express markings. Time and time again when Chopin writes *mezza voce* or *sotto voce* (and how characteristic of his piano-writing those markings are!) she gives us a good solid *mezzo forte*. When he writes one of his (again characteristic) crescendos to *piano*, she gives us either a diminuendo or a crescendo to *forte*. When he breaks a phrase, she plays it *legato*, and so forth. Now in music as personal as this the virtuoso must obviously feel free to change such markings as he (or she) feels incompatible with his interpretations, but I can detect no advantage from Miss Slenczynska's changes whatsoever—only a pervasive coarsening of style. And if you doubt what I say, I do beg you to find time to listen to Geza Anda's recording of the Op. 10 studies on Col. 33CX1459—a wonderful combination of strength with refinement.

Is it a quibble to complain of such a lack of literalness in Chopin-playing? Does this pianist's Polish ancestry give her authority to rewrite everything in the music but the actual notes? Even if your answers to these questions are affirmative, I think you must admit that there are frequent examples of over-peddalling on these four sides, and that in places where the left hand should provide rhythmic impulse beneath the right hand's embroidery, the rhythm is allowed to become stodgy. Moreover, one or two of the studies seem to me completely misconceived; Op. 10, No. 9, for example, could not possibly be described as *allegro molto agitato*, played like this. But there is little point in multiplying examples, for all they amount to is proof that Miss Slenczynska has a remarkable technique but very little feeling for Chopin.

The recording is rather clangy and resonant. There is a bad patch of pre-echo before the *allegro* section of Op. 25, No. 11. J.N.

LAURINDO ALMEIDA. Impressões do Brasil. Concertino for guitar and piano (Gnattali). Saudade (Gnattali). Tres Chôros (Sardinha): Chôro Triste, Chôro Gracioso, Nosso Chôro. Serenata: Copacabana Sunset (Almeida). Gavota-Chôro (Villalobos). Laurindo Almeida (guitar), Ray Turner (piano). Capitol P8381 (12 in., 41s. 8d.).

The *Concertino* by Radames Gnattali (born 1906) takes up almost the whole of side one and is much the most interesting music on the disc. The piano is used sparingly and ingeniously, the guitar writing is effective and varied in mood, and the ideas are clean and taut. The music has what I can easily believe is a Brazilian flavour. I cannot say the same of the short pieces for guitar alone on the other side. The three by Annibal Sardinha (who died recently at the early age of forty) are pretty but without either variety or, so far as I can see, Brazilian flavour—cosmopolitan light music of not great distinction. The guitarist has included two pieces by himself, one of them in memory of Sardinha with whom he used to play guitar duos. The gavotte by Villalobos forms the last movement of his *Suite*

populaire brésilienne written in 1912. With its eighteenth-century flavour it provides a contrast from the sentimental chords of the ninth that adorn the preceding pieces in such profusion, but in truth it is very undistinguished music, and it is a pity that the guitarist did not choose one of the more characteristic pieces for the instrument by this very variable composer.

Laurindo Almeida, who plays this music, is said to be equally at home with jazz bands and "on the classical concert stage". His technique is remarkable, and I have never heard a guitarist make so few squeaks and sliding noises on the fingerboard. Devotees of the Spanish guitar who hope for exciting exhibitionistic rhythms will be disappointed. This apparently is not how they play the guitar in Brazil. Almeida favours the nostalgic style, and though he is not a musician of the Segovia class he plays expressively. His pianist gives an exemplary performance and the recording is first-rate. If only the music of side 2 were more interesting, I would recommend this record to a wider circle than that of guitar addicts.

R.F.

CHORAL AND SONG

BACH. (a) *Easter Oratorio*. Aria: "Saget, saget mir geschwinde." (b) *Cantata No. 63, "Christen ätzt diesen Tag."* Recitative: "O sel'ger Tag." (c) *Cantata No. 133, "Ich freue mich in Dir."* Aria: "Getrost es fast." (d) *Cantata No. 161, "Komm, du süsse Todesstunde."* Recitative: "Der Schluss ist schon gemacht"; Aria: "Komm, du süsse Todesstunde." (e) *Cantata No. 21, "Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis."* Recitative: "Wie, hast du dich, mein Gott"; Aria: "Bäche von gesalz'nen Zähren." (f) *Cantata No. 46, "Schauet doch und sehet."* Recitative: "So klage du." (g) *Cantata No. 21, "Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis."* Aria: "Erfreue dich." (h) *Cantata No. 104, "Du Hirte Israel, Höre."* Recitative: "Der höchste Hüter sorgt für mich"; Aria: "Verbirgt mein Hirte sich zu lange." **Hildegard Rössl-Majdan** (alto, a, b, c, d), **Hugues Cuénod** (tenor, e, f, g, h), **Vienna State Opera Orchestra** conducted by **Felix Prohaska** (a & d), **Vienna Chamber Orchestra** conducted by **Michael Gielen** (b & c), **Vienna Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Jonathan Sternberg** (e, f, g, h). Vanguard PVL7059 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

These pieces from Bach's Church Cantatas are assembled in an odd way, the first alto aria from *Komm, du süsse Todesstunde* (No. 161) with which the cantata, in fact, begins—being preceded by the alto recitative that is the third number. On the reverse side the two tenor arias from *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis* (No. 21) are separated by the tenor recitative from *Schauet doch und sehet* (No. 46). As the tenor arias are well contrasted—one expressing grief, the other joy—this arrangement

does not seem called for. These criticisms are, of course, only applicable if one intends to play the two sides straight through.

Hilde Rössl-Majdan is an immensely satisfying Bach singer. Her tone is unfailingly beautiful, her line, phrasing, and sense of rhythm, impeccable: she gives you the feeling that she is reaching the heart of the matter in each of the pieces she sings. "Saget, saget, mir geschwinde" ("Tell me, tell me, quick and truly, tell me why doth Jesus tarry?") from the *Easter Oratorio*, scored for two oboes (*d'amore*), strings, bassoon (and, of course, continuo) is an urgent aria with a few touching bars, *adagio*, expressive of longing just before the *da capo*. It is finely sung and played. *Christen, ätzt diesen Tag* (Christians all, this happy day) (No. 63) is one of the Christmas cantatas. The accompanied recitative (strings and organ) breathes quiet happiness ("O Sel'ger Tag!"—"O sacred day!") and humility at the love shown "to a faithless, stubborn people" by the coming of the Saviour. Miss Rössl-Majdan sings it most beautifully, especially the last words, immediately repeated, "O unbegreifliches, doch seliges Verfügen" ("O wondrous act of grace, O blessed dispensation") which she fills with tender wonder. The string tone, in this recitative, is lovely.

The aria "Getrost! es fasst ein heil'ger Leib" ("O joy! God veils His majesty in our poor flesh") also comes from a Christmas cantata, *Ich freue mich in Dir*—In Thee do I rejoice (No. 133) and is scored for two oboes (*d'amore*) and continuo. In this joyous aria the voice repeats "Getrost!" twice on two rising intervals of the common chord, this being the "leading motive" of the aria, which has a particularly lovely middle section. Once again singer and orchestra capture just the right tempo and feeling.

Miss Rössl-Majdan was the alto soloist in *Komm, du süsse Todesstunde*—Come thou sweet hour of death—on Vanguard PVL 7004, with the same conductor but a different orchestra. The recitative (No. 3) and aria (No. 1) are here much better recorded and there is no sense of undue hurry in the aria with the opening words of the Cantata—one of Bach's most wonderful addresses to Death—while the entries of the organ with the chorale melody "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden" are always clearly heard and are well integrated into the accompaniment. My only complaint is that one of the two recorders is not always perfectly in tune.

The situation on the reverse side of the disc is not so happy. The organ is too loudly recorded in the recitative "Wie, hast du dich, mein Gott?" ("Why hast Thou Lord my God?") from the Cantata *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*—My spirit was in heaviness (No. 21), the string basses equally so in the aria "Bäche von gesalz'nen Zähren" ("Fast my bitter tears are flowing") and that excellent artist Hugues Cuénod sounds in poor voice and ill at ease. He does much better in the aria from Part II of the Cantata "Erfreue dich, Seele" ("Rejoice, O my spirit"), which he imbues with a real sense of joy, and the balance between voice

and accompaniment is more satisfactory. Both in the beautiful recitative from *Schauet doch und sehet*—Now behold and tell me (No. 46), which describes Jesus weeping over Jerusalem and the city's doom and in the recitative and aria from *Du Hirte Israel*—Thou Shepherd of Israel (No. 109), Mr. Cuénod is too inflexible in tone and, in the aria he sounds breathless. This latter Cantata is a lovely and tranquil pastoral and the excerpts chosen, the recitative "Der höchste Hüter sorgt für mich" ("The heavenly Shepherd cares for me") and aria "Verbirgt mein Hirte sich zu lange" ("My Shepherd's gone and I am lonely") require much more expressive treatment.

All the material on this disc, with the exception—so far as I know—of the items from Cantata No. 161, is taken from complete recordings of the works concerned (although not necessarily available in this country). The excellent sleeve note includes German texts with English translations.

A.R.

ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBAN

MUSIC. Air: "Can she excuse my wrongs" (Dowland). Air for three viols (Morley). Air: "Of all the birds that I do know" (Bartlett). Alman for harpsichord (Johnson, set by Giles Farnaby). Air: "If my complaints could passions move" (Dowland). Pavan for four viols (Jenkins). Air: "I care not for these ladies" (Campanian). "My Lady Hunsdon's Puffe" for lute (Dowland). Air: "Pandalpho" (Parsons). Fantasia in C for four viols (Jenkins). Air: "From silent night" (Dowland). "Up tails all" for harpsichord (Farnaby). **Alfred Deller** (counter-tenor), **Desmond Dupré** (lute), **Gustav Leonhardt** (harpsichord) with the **Consort of Viols of the Leonhardt Baroque Ensemble** (Eduard Melkus and Alice Hoffelner, treble viols; Nicolaus Harnoncourt and Gustave Leonhardt, bass viols). Vanguard PVL7027 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

Now that Vanguard have eventually decided to release their series of Deller records in this country (they have been available for a long time in the United States) they seem to be coming with a rush. Last month we had a magnificent record devoted to the music of Thomas Tallis, and now here is a recital of secular music of the following generation. Actually Robert Parsons died before Tallis, being drowned while bathing in the Trent at Newark in 1570, but he was in all probability still a young man, and his music breathes the new freedom of the Elizabethan age. "Pandalpho" was certainly written for a play, probably one of the famous performances put on by the Children of the Chapel Royal; it is exceptionally dramatic, particularly in the ornamented version Deller uses on this record (he recorded a stricter version, with string accompaniment, on PVL7035). But Parsons merely foreshadows the achievements of John Dowland as a song-writer. The three Dowland songs on this record are all magnificent examples

of his art, and indeed *From silent night* is one of the finest songs in the English language. Deller sings these, and also the much lighter little songs by Bartlett and Campian, with consistently beautiful tone and a real attention to the meaning of the words. *Nature art disdains*, say the words of Campian's song, but Deller does not. Some people find his style too artificial, in fact, but I think that on this record he is on his best form—not to say behaviour.

The instrumental contributions are rather less distinguished, but they too include some attractive things. Desmond Dupré and Gustav Leonhardt make their brief contributions to the recital efficiently, even if their playing is a little lacking in personality. The weakest items are those supplied by the viol consort, as might be expected, for there is an appalling dearth of musicians capable of getting their characteristic virtues from these instruments. Leonhardt's group are too percussive in their rhythm, and their tone lacks the bright forward ring of really accomplished players; the result, it must be admitted, is on the dreary side. But in spite of this the record as a whole provides a well-planned and enjoyable recital of English music from around the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth. J.N.

HANDEL. *Messiah*: "And the Glory of the Lord"; "Hallelujah"; "Worthy is the Lamb"; "Amen". Westminster Choir with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. Philips ABE10053 (7 in., 15s. 3½d.).

Unrecommended, for this is a thick, full performance, resonantly recorded, in which scarcely any words are audible. Three of these four choruses—"Hallelujah" and the final pair—appear on Columbia SEL1512, from the Huddersfield/Sargent set, together with "Let us break their bonds". Comparison of the massive American "And the glory", and the lilting Scherchen version (Nixa EP NEC23001), with its lighter accompaniment and buoyant harpsichord continuo, leaves little doubt about which kind of performance best suits the gramophone. A.P.

VLADIMIR RUSHDIAK. *Song Recital.* *French Songs* (arr. Britten): "Le roi s'en va en chasse"; "La belle est au jardin d'amour"; "Quand j'étais chez mon père". *Croatian Song* (arr. Rushdiak). *A Tune* (Baranovitch). *Il Sedecia, Re di Gerusalemme* (A. Scarlatti): "Caldo Sangue". *Aria*: "Venite a concilio". *Don Quichotte à Dulcinée* (Ravel): Romantic song; Epic song; Drinking song. *Vladimir Rushdiak* (baritone), *Alfred Holecek* (piano). Supraphon LPM290 (10 in., 30s. 11d.).

This record presents the Yugoslav baritone in an altogether more favourable light than did the operatic recital I reviewed a month or two ago. He is particularly winning in the rueful delivery of "Quand j'étais chez mon père", a song of the shepherd boy who didn't keep the wolf from the

fold: "there weren't very many . . . there weren't any". This lyrical baritone has a very pleasant voice, and a good deal of natural musical feeling. There is a fault, however; he does not do much to vary the tone, and consequently his interpretations have nothing like the pointfulness of Gérard Souzay's. (Souzay has recorded not only the Ravel cycle, but also "Caldo sangue", which is an aria from A. Scarlatti's lenten opera, *Sedecia, Re di Gerusalemme*.) Still, an enjoyable disc, well accompanied and well recorded. A.P.

MAHLER. *Early Songs from "Das Knaben Wunderhorn"*: (a) Hans und Grethe; (a) Scheiden und Meiden; (a) Frühlingsmorgen; (b) Ich ging mit Lust durch einen grünen wald; Es sunen drei Engel. *Last songs from Rückert*: Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder; Ich atmet' einen linden Duft; Liebst du um Schönheit; Um Mitternacht; Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen. Orchestrated by (a) R. Heger and (b) L. Windsperger. *Anny Felbermayer* (soprano), *Alfred Poell* (baritone). *Vienna State Opera Orchestra* conducted by *Felix Prohaska*. Vanguard PVL7022 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

The sleeve note of this disc contains the German texts of the songs with English translations—which is highly praiseworthy—but should have indicated that the poems of *Frühlingsmorgen* and *Hans und Grethe* from the collection of fourteen songs under the title *Lieder und Gesänge aus der Jugendzeit* are not taken from *Das Knaben Wunderhorn*. The first has a poem by R. Leander, the second is traditional. The Rückert songs are not sung in sequence, but are placed two at the end of side 1 and the remaining three at the end of side 2. The writer of the note tells us this order was chosen because of their "similarity of mood and style", a reason which I do not myself find at all convincing. It is true these lovely songs do not form a cycle of the narrative kind, but one does not want their "intimate mood and style" to be disturbed by arbitrary contrast with the generally cheerful mood and more elaborate orchestration of the earlier songs. This little grumble over, I can go on to say how much I enjoyed the excellent performances we are here given. Anny Felbermayer has exactly the right type of voice for the delightful youthful songs and is particularly charming in "Hansel and Gretel" (in which the words only, not the tune, are traditional) and in "Three Angels were singing" ("Es sunen drei Engel"), which is an arrangement for soprano and orchestra of the fifth movement of the Third Symphony, scored there for contralto, women's and boys' chorus, with bells included among the instruments. The touching poem describes the angels rejoicing that Peter's sins are forgiven by his Master, his self-accusation and tears (the cadences at this point being identical with those in the soprano solo in the last movement of the Fourth Symphony) and the angels' assurance that all is now well.

Alfred Poell subdues his big voice

wonderfully well, on the whole, to the requirements of the first four Rückert songs and is, of course, able to give full weight to the fine climax of "At Midnight" ("Um Mitternacht"). In this song, and in the exquisite and deeply moving one that precedes it, "I have become lost to the world" ("Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen"), with its poignant last words "I live alone in mine own Heaven. I live for love's sake, whose life is song", Kathleen Ferrier (in my opinion) reached, in her recording (Decca LXT2721), the highest point of her art; but Mr. Poell's rendering of the whole group is most acceptable, and, once more, I do wish the songs had been placed in the proper sequence. The orchestral playing is very good and the balance between voice and orchestra reasonably so.

I hope Vanguard will restore to the catalogue Poell's fine recording of the numbers from *Das Knaben Wunderhorn* (The Youth's Magic Horn) which he recorded on VLP412, now deleted, replacing the songs on the two discs under that number poorly sung by Lorna Sydney with Anny Felbermayer. A.R.

OPERATIC

FIBICH. Sarka.

Premysl	Vaclav Bednar (bar.)
Ctirad	Lubomir Haviak (ten.)
Vitoraz	Jaroslav Veverka (bass)
Vlasta	Marta Krasova (alto)
Sarka	Marie Podvalova (sop.)

Chorus and Orchestra of the Prague National Theatre conducted by Zdenek Chalabala. Supraphon LPV154-6 (three 12 in., 119s. 10½d.).

Younger than Smetana and Dvořák, Zdenek Fibich (1850-1900) is with them a pilgrim founder of Czech national music. Supraphon have already brought us, both in 78 days and more recently, a certain amount of his music, notably excerpts from the opera *The Bride of Messina*; and we have learnt that his prevailing tone is a dark, grave lyricism. Here now we have a complete opera, on a curious subject that fascinated more than one Czech composer.

The Czech dynasty—so legend had it—was founded by Prince Premysl and Princess Libuse, each of whom had a council of rulers of their own sex. When Libuse died, her women were denied any share in the rule of the country. They resented this, and with Sarka as one of their Amazonian generals, declared war on the men. One episode in this war—which ended in the destruction of the rebellious women—was the capture by Sarka of Ctirad, one of Premysl's most gallant lieutenants. Sarka had herself bound to a tree, as the bait in an ambush into which Ctirad fell. Fibich adapted the story—you will probably have guessed how: Sarka and Ctirad fall in love, and love proves stronger than loyalty. To save Ctirad's life, Sarka betrays the women.

In the first act we find the spirited Sarka rousing Vlasta and her companions to rebellion. The men arrive in the sacred grove to sacrifice; Premysl sings an eloquent lament addressed to Libuse, and Vitoraz leads the ceremony with the

solemnity proper to bass high priests. But the women burst in suddenly like so many angry suffragettes, demanding their rights. Sarka challenges Ctirad to a duel; he laughs at her. War between the sexes is declared.

So far the music tends to be low-toned, dramatic in a fairly effective way in the action passages, but not particularly striking. The heart of the opera is the second act. There is a dramatic prelude, and a fierce scene where Vlasta's troops, who have had initial victories, assemble with their spoils—including the bloody head of a well-known woman-hater. Then Sarka, with her patrol, prepares the ambush. There is a beautiful aria in which she muses on the hatred for Ctirad which is so nearly love, and this merges into a passage, curiously Straussian in effect, where her companions assure her that she is indeed lovely enough to entrap the warrior. The voices twine and cradle one another in a magical ensemble. Sarka has a second aria, to a "Forest Murmurs" accompaniment, as she awaits Ctirad. Later there is a love duet: ecstatic as (like Tristan and Isolde) they realise that their hatred is turned to love, then lyrical as (like many another pair of operatic lovers) they gaze at the night, and at the shining stars. In the last act Sarka leads the men to the women's stronghold where Ctirad is prisoner. The women are slain, but their bloody ghosts rise up to disturb Sarka, who flees from Ctirad's embrace and hurls herself over a precipice.

The second act is complete on LPV156, and one would like to be able to recommend it warmly. But, alas, the Sarka, Marie Podvalova, sings with so desperate a wobble that only the very keenest of Fibichians will be able to face with equanimity repeated hearings of the record. Mme Podvalova (Princess in *Rusalka*, Milada in *Dalibor*) and her wobble are no strangers to us. This soprano has a sense of drama, a feeling for effective utterance, a strong voice, and occasionally an exciting one. But she will not do here. The tenor, Lubomir Havlak, is a reliable though not a particularly ingratiating singer, beefy, and not at all delicate in style. Marta Krasova is more pleasing, and the baritone and bass are satisfactory: indeed the baritone has some eloquent moments. The recording is adequate; and—most admirably—there comes with the records a libretto containing text and translation (less odd than some: though a reference to "waistline" strikes an anachronistic note).

In Smetana's *Sarka* (one of the tone-poems that make up *Ma Vlast*, 1874-9), Ctirad is killed. Fibich's opera appeared in 1897, ten years after Janacek had composed his *Sarka*—an opera not performed, however, until 1925. A.P.

Correction

On page 415 of the March issue the accompanist to Fischer-Dieskau's Schumann recital was given as Gerald Moore. We have since been advised by H.M.V. that this should have read Hertha Klust.

LEONCAVALLO. I Pagliacci: Prologue.

VERDI. Ballo in Maschera: Air of Renato (Act 2). **Vladimir Rushdiak** (baritone), **Prague Smetana Theatre Orchestra** conducted by **Danilo Svara**. Supraphon SUEC806 (7 in., 13s. 2½d.).

What constitutes "sympathy" for a voice? We argue in vain. To one pair of ears a voice sounds "harsh", to another noble and expressive. Russian audiences applaud indiscriminately basses who make me marvel, and sopranos who make me blush and wince. I personally find Mr. Rushdiak's baritone very pleasing. He is not infallible in matters of taste as the boo-hoo effect, which fails anyway to come off, at the end of a sluggishly accompanied "Eri tu" will show you. Under pressure in the recitative and also in the effortful ending to the *Pag.* prologue, the voice undergoes some fluctuation. To my ear, however, it is not disagreeable, not in fact "a wobble", only a vibrato, a beat. For the rest, the solidity of voice, the colour and his expressive powers please me. I do not put this singer in the first flight, but he would be a great acquisition to most opera companies. P.H.-W.

SULLIVAN. The Mikado.

The Mikado of Japan

Nanki-Poo

Ko-Ko

Pooh-Bah

Pish-Tush

Go-Go

Yum-Yum

Pitti-Sing

Peep-Bo

Katisha

Donald Adams

Thomas Round

Peter Pratt

Kenneth Sandford

Alan Styler

Owen Grundy

Jean Hindmarsh

Beryl Dixon

Jennifer Toye

Ann Drummond-Grant

D'Oyly Carte Opera Company and New Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by **Isidore Godfrey** (Chorus-Master: W. Cox-Ife). Decca LK4251-52 (two 12 in., 71s. 8d.).

D'Oyly Carte Opera Co.

D'Oyly Carte, Godfrey

Sargent

(7/50) LK4010-1

(9/55) ALP1255-8

(12/57) ALP1485-6

With no fewer than four recordings of *The Mikado* available for comparison it becomes obvious that the D'Oyly Carte "tradition" which was initiated by W. S. Gilbert himself, has proved so overpowering that the actual performances show surprisingly little variation. The principals have always been chosen for type, and the smallest points of by-play, such as coughs, hesitations and what-not have been meticulously retained. This, of course, refers to the D'Oyly Carte sets, and it has undoubtedly been the chief factor in securing the survival of the operas through several generations.

The earlier sets have had their day. The H.M.V. was originally issued in 1936 and transferred to LP in 1955, and that of the Decca dates from 1950. Both included Darrell Fancourt and Martyn Green.

The new Decca set shows very considerable improvement from the recording point of view, and the orchestral playing by the New Symphony Orchestra of London was possibly inspired by the orchestra under Sargent on the more recent H.M.V. set, which also claims serious attention for the very high quality of the singing. The Decca (D'Oyly Carte) is a better presentation of the authentic Gilbert and Sullivan, each

individual is so distinct in type that there is not for one moment any confusion as to which character is supposed to be singing, since they fit exactly the parts as understood by all who know the opera. There is, however, a tendency with the H.M.V. set to import a whiff here and there of heavier operatic tone. Again, in the matter of tempi, the Decca is somewhat brisker, so much so, that at times the effect is rather hurried and, in some of the quick "patter" passages, taxes the powers of the singers to the utmost in getting the words over.

To sum up, I should say that the new Decca set will hold its own for its authenticity among real lovers of Gilbert and Sullivan, but that the H.M.V. Sargent will remain its rival on purely musical merits.

The Mikado followed *Princess Ida*, which was almost a failure, in 1885. It came after the first real difference between the collaborators on the subject of libretti. Sullivan had flatly refused to write music for yet another of Gilbert's ultra topsy-turvy plots, demanding something a little nearer human nature. *The Mikado* was Gilbert's nearest approach, but it saved the day, and on its production the new opera ran for more than 600 nights. V. HOMEWOOD.

SULLIVAN. The Pirates of Penzance.

Major-General

Pirate King

Sergeant of Police

Samuel

Frederic

Mabel

Edith

Kate

Ruth

Peter Pratt

Donald Adams

Kenneth Sandford

Howard Short

Thomas Round

Jean Hindmarsh

Beryl Dixon

Marion Martin

Ann Drummond-Grant

D'Oyly Carte Opera Company and New Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by **Isidore Godfrey** (Chorus-Master: W. Cox-Ife). Decca LK4249-50 (two 12 in., 71s. 8d.).

D'Oyly Carte Opera Co.

(1/51) LK4004-5

The previous Decca LP set of *The Pirates of Penzance* was very well done, and one can hardly expect any great differences. Indeed a comparison of the two leaves the latest version with a slight advantage in recording quality, owing to the seven years that have elapsed between them. The new one is richer and rounder, particularly in the concerted numbers and in the orchestral accompaniments, otherwise it is a matter of personal preference for individual singers, and as the performance is in the best D'Oyly Carte tradition, I have no hesitation in recommending the new set.

The Pirates of Penzance followed *H.M.S. Pinafore* when the collaborators were still in their first mutual enthusiasm, and it showed a distinct advance in technique. Gilbert's topsy-turvy fancies had not begun to irk Sullivan, and one sees the emergence of certain successful forms that appeared in the later works of the series, notably the amazing patter song of the Major-General, of which Peter Pratt gives a first rate performance, and Sullivan's clever use of the chorus in "How beautifully blue the sky", when the girls discuss the weather, while Mabel and Frederic make love. Another number is the Chorus of Police with its effective "Tarantara" motive and "Grand Opera" climax, while Gilbert's sense of fun and Sullivan's ability to make

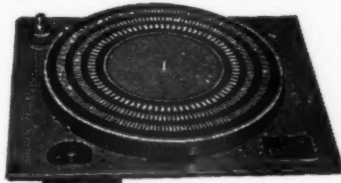
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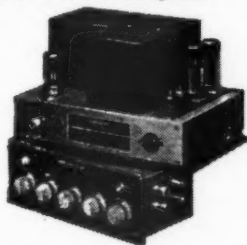
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LK 4092-3

Highlights with Highlights from *The Pirates of Penzance*

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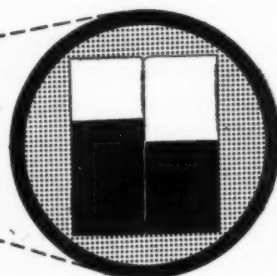
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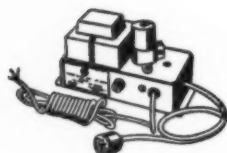
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the most of it without overdoing things has an outstanding example in the meeting of the Police and the Pirates, when the latter have come to take vengeance on the Major-General for having told them the "terrible story" of his being an "orphan boy". There is one addition to previous recorded versions, in Mabel's recitative and the church-like responses of the Pirates, immediately before the Police-Sergeant's famous song, "When a felon's not engaged in his employment".

The history of *The Pirates of Penzance* has one feature that is unique in the series. It was first performed in New York. Gilbert and Sullivan had gone there with Frederic Clay and Cellier to produce an authentic version of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, which had been shamelessly pirated. At first impact, it was a great success, but they were too late, and business fell off. They decided to advance the production of the next opera, which was *The Pirates of Penzance*, although the music was then barely half finished. Sullivan worked night and day to finish it, and as he scored, Clay and Cellier copied the parts. It was produced with tremendous success on December 31st, 1879, and a single "copyright" performance was given less than 24 hours later at Paignton. It came into regular repertoire on April 17th, 1880.

V. HOMEWOOD.

TCHAIKOVSKY. The Enchantress.

Prince Nikita Danilich Kurlative M. Kiselev
Princess Evpraksia Romanovna V. Borisenko
Prince Uri G. Nelepp
Mamirov A. Korolev
Nenila A. Matishina
Ivan Zhuran M. Skaslin
Nastasia N. Sokolova
Foka A. Tichenov
Polia V. Gradova
Balakia S. Sladkopevtsev
Potap L. Chatchaturov
Lukash A. Usmanov
Kitchiga G. Troitsky
Paist P. Pontriagin
Kudma P. Korobkov

Chorus of the All Russian Radio and Moscow State Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by S. Samosud. Parlophone PMA1029-32 (four 12 in., £8 6s. 10d.).

This is an interesting issue and welcome. As one who has derived enormous pleasure from at least two (counting *Mazeppa* three) of Tchaikovsky's operas, I have sought and found a good deal to beguile me here. But it simply cannot be put into the same class as *Eugen Onegin* (1879). The first performance of *The Enchantress* was conducted by Tchaikovsky himself in St. Petersburg in 1887 and it was not at all a success. Nor was a revised version later in Moscow. Critics praised the opening scene of peasant merrymaking, but the length and tedium of some of the later scenes did not escape censure. Tchaikovsky himself had great difficulty in getting on with the composition. He had liked Shpazinskiy's story at first and had commissioned the libretto with enthusiasm. But the truth is he could not warm to the characters (as he did even to the unpleasant Herman of *The Queen of Spades*). The enchantress (a sort of menial Kundry), the noble father and son whom she entices and sets at enmity, the vengeful and distraught princess who gives her a dose of poison remain figures of a nightmare ballet

rather than human, believably motivated people. That is a price often paid in the theatre for recourse to an unexplained magic power (though this need not be so, as witness Wagner's *Tristan*). However, what is rather strange is that Tchaikovsky can at times write some of the most haunted of all music. Think of the sense of evil excitement created for the entrance of Odille in Act 2 of *The Swan Lake*; or the midnight terrors of Herman in his quarters as the dead Countess comes on him, in *The Queen of Spades* (1890). Of course there are exciting passages here too, but I do not feel that they tighten the scalp in the best Tchaikovsky manner. Even the last side where you get a positively Elizabethan orgy of poison and death—with the princely father slaying his son as rival for the sorceress's love, the latter writhing in mortal colic and the princess lamenting, all sounds curiously hollow, as if the composer had rather ceased to believe in the situation; in which I am inclined to sympathise with him.

The opening scenes at the Inn outside Nijky Novgorod (Gorky, just now) have much spirit. The sorceress who is the inn-keeper, an alluring, childless widow whose wine has magic power, beguiles the prince (a sleepless Igor-like figure). Here also amid the revels the sorceress encounters the prince's son Uri and falls in love with him. The Act works up to a finale which is an "Idiot's Dance". Act 2 contains scenes between the lonely and forsaken Romanoff princess and her son who elicits the secret of his father's desertion and vows vengeance on the wicked enchantress. Follows a stirring marital showdown between the spouses. Act 3 shows us first father then son in the toils of the seductive Nastasia (she is referred to in Russian nearly all the time as "kyma" or godmother). Good tugging tunes develop. The last Act shows the deserted princesses' revenge, with a strong scene between the two women; and the fearsome final deeds of shame, though these are delayed by arias, from such other figures as the bass wizard Kudma from whom the fatal poison is acquired. The introduction to this last Act, with its distant hunting horns is an imaginative atmospheric piece, owing I suppose something to Berlioz and Wagner: or at least Tchaikovsky showing that he too could turn his hand to this kind of thing. It is also a fair sample of the sonority of these records which strikes me as perfectly adequate.

The conducting, however, is decidedly pedestrian and not at all the orchestral playing in the top class. Of the singers I shall use the word "idiomatic" and if anyone says that that evades the issue he will be perfectly justified. The truth is that Russian solo sopranos seem to me to make the least seductive noises (with very rare exceptions). They wobble, they sing with passion but disregard for pitch. Sokolova is a worse offender in such things than Borisenko. But neither won my affection—and as that is rather the point in an opera about enchantment, they are something of a handicap. Father and son, however, as sung by Kiselev, baritone, and Nelepp, tenor, have both character and a likeable timbre to commend

them. Korolev and Khorobkov are also reliable and the chorus singing is rich and spirited. I would call it a fair average broadcast performance—with much interest by the way for the amateur of Tchaikovsky's operatic method, because you continually hear echoes of *The Maid of Orleans*, *Mazeppa* and foretastes of *Pique Dame*, but it is hardly the occasion for boundless enthusiasm.

P.H.-W.

SMETANA. The Bartered Bride: Duets; "Mit der Mutter sank zu Grabe"; "So find ich dich, Geliebte, hier"; **Anny Schlemm** (soprano), **Walther Ludwig** (tenor), **Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Fritz Lehmann**. D.G.G. EPL30302 (7 in., 16s. 8½d.).

More excerpts from that *Verkaufte Braut* disc of highlights with a Munich cast, so far not issued over here except in bits. These two duets are No. 5, "As my mother blessed me", and No. 29, "Stop it, girl... What an obstinate girl"—the first being Jenik's account and Marenka's sympathetic echo of the curse a cruel stepmother can be, which passes into the swaying, gently lilting love-duet; the second, the scene in which Jenik laughs while Marenka grows steadily angrier at what seems to her to be her lover's betrayal. But here it is "Hans" and "Marie", rather than Jenik and Marenka: take as read all that regular grumble about dishing out Smetana's Czech opera, to a British audience, in a German translation. The performance is agreeable, smooth but not very strongly flavoured, and certainly no better than the "John" and "Mary" of the Covent Garden or Sadler's Wells *Bartered Brides* might provide. Clean, easy recording. A.P.

POETRY AND DICTION

SPEAIGHT. Ode to Evening (William Collins). **Elegy in a Country Churchyard; Ode on the death of a Cat** (Thomas Gray). **An Ode for Music; Lines on a Paper** (William Collins). **The Deserted Village** (Oliver Goldsmith). Read by **Robert Speaight**. Argo RG119 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Recommended. This is very beautiful reading, not at all histrionic but bearing, I would say, many repetitions without any thing but an increase of admiration. First time through, an impression may be made of underplaying. The particular temptation to be avoided in Gray's wonderful *Elegy* is to permit the tremor of recognising "beauty" to invade the voice, thus importing a terrible "listening for the music" consideration; dangerous, too, would be a tone of gentle moralising in what must and should be purely elegaic. Yet though subdued the reading is always alive, always filled with meaning, never hollow. I listened to it with steady pleasure (though between ourselves, like most other people, I felt that I could make quite as big an effect on myself by reading it to myself). Mr. Speaight's voice is perfectly based. It has character, but not, if one may so put it, too much. You are

aware of him; but he does not obtrude. He likewise carries off the appallingly difficult feat of reading the drowned cat piece without a hint of that archness with which some awful pedagogue has usually killed the poem for us at school. On the long Goldsmith side Mr. Speaight maintains a perfect evenness of delivery, a tour de force as difficult to achieve as it is unaffected. Technically the record is of a good standard.

P.H.-W.

SHAKESPEARE. Complete and uncut texts, as edited by **John Dover Wilson**. **Julius Caesar.** Argo RG132-4 (three 12 in., £6 5s. 3d.). **Coriolanus.** Argo RG135-8 (four 12 in., £8 6s. 10d.). **Richard II.** Argo 139-41 (three 12 in., £6 5s. 3d.). Recorded by past and present members of the **Marlowe Society of the University of Cambridge.** Directed by **George Rylands.** Recorded under the auspices of the British Council. (Full texts for each play are available from Argo, price 5s. each. Text, plus annotation and glossary, price 18s.)

"Only musical critics", wrote Bernard Shaw, "should be allowed to meddle with Shakespeare"—an attitude seemingly echoed by George Rylands, the director of these plays, who speaks of "Shakespeare the word-musician" and splits up *Coriolanus*, in his introductory notes, into "movements". Let this, then, be my warrant for appearing outside my normal fields. The music critic is accustomed to looking beyond technical accomplishment to subtleties of pace, accent and phrasing, to interpretation and style, and to the *sense of performance* achieved. My esteemed colleague P.H.-W., reviewing the first three plays issued in this big project, welcomed the attempt to provide cleanly-spoken versions of the plays, praised the efforts of the Marlowe Society, but excused himself from full criticism of the performances. We must all be sympathetic to the British Council's aim in presenting Shakespeare to audiences abroad, to whom clarity is a virtue not to be lightly dismissed, and of course the Marlowe Society's probity and enthusiasm are much to be applauded; but after listening to the three plays listed above I found myself not convinced by them as performances.

Though there are trumpet tuckets and the like (some of them pretty repetitious) and occasional crowd noises, scenes of fighting, grunts and so on, these are not theatrical productions, since there is a lack of feeling of presence and of pace, both in individual speeches and in scenes. Still less do they resemble sound radio dramatic productions. Dover Wilson claims that "the listener to these records may follow with the book if he desires, but he will be wiser to attend with the ear alone"; but without the text, or at least the synopsis provided, it is frequently excessively difficult to identify who is speaking or (in the absence of any interpolated explanation) to discover the setting of a new scene. Even the action is sometimes obscure, as in the scene of Exton's assassination of Richard II.

These are more like readings with a few incidental noises thrown in for good measure—a view supported by Ivor Brown, who declares "It would be foolish for undergraduates to attempt feats of histrionic bravura: what they can do, well trained, is to show loyalty to the lines and respect for the values of the verse". If this is indeed the be-all and end-all of this project, one can scarcely cavil seriously. One may however question whether these virtues are sufficient for an issue of masterpieces like this. It is rather as if one were producing records of, let us say, Mozart operas, and was asking no more than loyalty to the text and a respect for the shape of phrases. I do not doubt the financial and other difficulties which forced the decision to employ mostly amateur talents in this project, and I certainly do not wish to be misunderstood as decrying their efforts; but I feel bound to ask whether the basic conception of this series is adequate to the greatness of the plays.

The standard of casting is very variable. Alongside an excellent Menenius in *Coriolanus* (evidently an experienced actor, and one of the few with a real understanding of the rhythm of words) and a suitably arrogant Coriolanus, a good Cassius and Calpurnia and a quite good Antony, and an effective Gaunt and Carlisle in *Richard II* must be considered some excessively Cambridge voices (Richard II himself, and Portia in *Julius Caesar*), an unconvincing Duchess of York, some colourless players, and one or two to whom one feels like saying, like the character in *Coriolanus*, "Methinks thou speak'st not well". The two most noticeable faults are a slowness on cues which detracts from the continuity and build-up of scenes, and a very general bad habit, particularly prevalent in *Julius Caesar* and *Richard II*, of pausing at the ends of lines. Useful as this may be to foreign students in following the text, the sense and the rhythm of a speech are bound to suffer: it is something like pausing at bar-lines in a musical performance in order that the metrical structure shall be made plain. But rhythm is more important than metre, and the effect is sometimes that the player does not fully comprehend what he is saying. Oddly enough, the highly rhetorical *Coriolanus*, whose complex "knotted idiom" is mentioned by Mr. Rylands, emerges as the best acted of these three plays. The recording throughout, if one ignores some echoes in the Cambridge theatre in which it was made, is fairly good.

Does all this read too severely? I hope not. One cannot but be swayed and moved by the language, and conscious of the work of all those concerned in this venture; and since there are few recordings of Shakespeare's plays by professional companies, there is no doubt that very many people will be grateful for these discs. Perhaps I have been spoiled by the position in music recordings, where a consciousness of nuances of performance is taken for granted, and the finest international artists are engaged for the accepted masterpieces of the repertoire.

L.S.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

ENRICO CARUSO. *Xerxes* (Handel): "Ombra mai fu". *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Donizetti): "Una furtiva lagrima". *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Donizetti): "Chi mi frena" (with Amelita Galli-Curci, Minnie Egner, Giuseppe de Luca, Marcel Journet, Angelo Bada). *La Bohème* (Puccini): "Che gelida manina"; "O soave fanciulla" (with Geraldine Farrar). *Tosca* (Puccini): "Recondita armonia". *La Gioconda* (Poncielli): "Cielo e mar". *I Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo): "Vesti la giubba". *Amadis* (Lully): "Bois épais". *L'Africain* (Meyerbeer): "O Paradiso". *Carmen* (Bizet): Air de la fleur. *Manon* (Massenet): "Ah! Fuyez douce image". *Le Cid* (Massenet): "O Souverain! O Juge! O Père!". *La Juive* (Halévy): "Racheli! Quand du Seigneur". *Marta* (Flotow): "Dormi pur" (with Frances Alda, Josephine Jacoby, Marcel Journet). R.C.A. RB16127 (12 in., 39s. 11d.).

I have had my say about these marvels when they were brought out in various other groupings on H.M.V. CSLP510, 511 and 512. They run from the 1904 single verse "Una furtiva lagrima", with the caressing turn at the end of the first stanza, to the much darker, more effortful Caruso of the 1920 "Ombra mai fu", not less wondrous in its way. Here is the famous 1917 *Lucia* sextet; the 1912 "Good Night" quartet from *Martha* in which the mezzo sounds a real dud but Caruso's dulcet attack on the phrase "Dormi pur" passes the test of perfection across the gulf of time and primitive recording.

The *Bohème* duet with Farrar (1912) gives a wonderful idea of two lovely voices perfectly based, perfectly secure. "Cielo e mar" (1910) and "O Paradiso" (1907) are examples of Caruso which should find a place in any collection. I'm not sure that my favourite of all is not the *Manon* "Ah fuyez"—for the sustained phrasing there is of the utmost heroism and perhaps the most marvellous thing in the whole collection.

These transfers are not all absolutely free of distortion, but in the main they should satisfy. P.H.-W.

BEETHOVEN. *Trio in B flat, Op. 97, "Archduke".* Alfred Cortot (piano), Jacques Thibaud (violin), Pablo Casals (cello). H.M.V. COLH29 (12 in., 41s. 8d.). Recorded October, 1928.

A few weeks ago I went to hear the "Archduke" Trio played by three Russian artists, and their glorious performance inspired several colleagues to declare that this was the finest account since the Cortot/Thibaud/Casals trio. Well, here for comparison is that famous old performance revived. It has some grand moments, in the mysterious bridge passage of the trio section of II, and in the Adagio variation movement. But as a whole it didn't give me sustained pleasure, partly because of wonky intonation (particularly in the development of I, where violin and cello have much

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octave doubling), partly because Cortot's playing is not at all clean, and partly—which is much more to the point, since a few bosh shots don't matter greatly when the performance is a fine one—because the reading of the outer movements left me quite cold. It's a respectable but not, for me, a treasurable one, as is theirs of Schubert's B flat trio.

In the accompanying booklet Jacques Fevrier praises it highly, the "incomparable breadth and nobility, without the least trace of turgidity" of the opening tune as played by Cortot, the "ample phrasing" of Casals and Thibaud's "more delicate playing", the "very exact distribution of the sforzandi subiti typical of Beethoven" and the "great brilliance and brio" of the finale. I quote his opinions because Fevrier is an admirable musician, and because his analyses can't objectively be disproved. He is obviously moved by the performance; I'm not. Readers may well prefer to take his advice on this reissue; but don't blame me if you find it dull, and the transfer rather scratchy. The erudite but quite profitable analysis in the booklet is by Alfred Orel; the booklet also contains a fabulous photograph of the three players taken in 1904, Cortot with a hearthbrush moustache, Thibaud something of a dandy in a patterned stock, Casals very much the young professor with domed forehead and burning eyes. W.S.M.

CHOPIN. Fourteen Valses. Alfred Cortot (piano). H.M.V. COLH32 (12 in., 4ls. 8½d.). Recorded June, 1934.

These recordings were made nearly twenty-five years ago, and at the time people talked about them in much the same tones of wonder that they used more recently for Lipatti's set. They still sound a Major Event, even though they lack the precision and accuracy with which Lipatti apparently played. Wrong notes are legion, and so are smudged passages with the sustaining pedal covering up heaven knows what indiscretions. Sometimes Cortot will come near to ruining a marvellous performance by over-use of the sustaining pedal at climaxes, notably in the A flat, Op. 42. He is usually better at quiet passages than loud ones. No pianist today would dare pull the time about so much, and so often, and he would be howled down by the critics if he did. He cannot play the quick repeated notes in the very first waltz. And yet, despite these formidable entries in the debit column, Cortot is very far from being in the red. His genius lay, I think, in his ability to play fast, quietly, and poetically all at the same time, and even more in his sensitive appreciation of phrasing. His rubato is, of course, aimed at shaping and pointing phrases, and this, with his extraordinarily subtle gradations of tone, gives his playing its famous poetic quality. This is Chopin as Fokine thought of him when he devised *Les Sylphides*, and, I fear, as we never, never hear him in the theatre. Cortot, despite his smudging, has remarkable technique. The "Minute" waltz receives a prodigious performance. The C sharp minor is almost deliciously lyrical, and who cares if Cortot

leaves out a good many of the left-hand chords in the quick sections—for instance, in the last page. No. 8 in A flat has a strikingly obsessive quality, almost neurotic, but its more famous successor in the same key is much less well played, sounding curiously beefy at times. The only other that seems to me to come anywhere near failure is the A minor, which does not seem to be sufficiently brooding. Cortot, I suppose, had more limitations than most great pianists, but despite my more carping remarks, they are seldom in evidence in music such as this, for it suited his mood and abilities wonderfully well.

On side one the recording quality is surprisingly good all through. Things do not go quite so well on the back for some reason, the B minor having rather a lot of surface noise and the D flat near the end more still; this last is something of a failure, presumably due to some lapse by the engineers in 1934. Many repeats are left out, but for good measure Cortot invents a couple that Chopin never thought of. There are only two scrolls a side, and it is hard to find any one waltz. With the record there is an interesting and scholarly twenty-four-page handbook, almost unnecessarily lavish with musical quotations, and a little marred by excessive and presumptuous use of the word "we". R.F.

FRANCK. (a) Symphonic Variations for piano and orchestra.

SCHUMANN. (b) Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54. Alfred Cortot (piano), **London Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Sir Landon Ronald**. H.M.V., COLH31 (12 in., 4ls. 8½d.). Recorded: (a) March, 1934, (b) June, 1927.

There must be many readers who grew up with these two sets, and whose ideas on the music are strongly coloured by Cortot's interpretations. This is the case in my experience of Schumann's concerto, though not of the Franck Variations. I lived with Cortot's performance for years, and learned the work first through him; and then I ceased to have access to the set—which was possibly fortunate, for what some people call "nursery records" can have a bad effect on your later listening, encouraging you to believe in the virtues of one interpretation only—and so to listen to it after fifteen years or so is a curious, rather Proustian experience. But apart from the memories of squabbles in the schoolroom and the like, it is also strange to re-encounter the attitude of mind, and the inflection of phrase which once upon a time were the true, the only way to play the Schumann concerto: the arpeggiated chords, the prominence of the piano in its accompaniment of the clarinet solo at bar 67 of the first movement (Animato in C major), the tempo of the coda to that movement, slower than usual at first with an impulsive *più mosso* later on, the very deliberate opening of the finale—they sound idiosyncratic now, for all that they bring back the past and for all that they are part of a strong and poetic performance. Loyalty does not waver, but it is able to view the performance dispassion-

ately, accepting the wrong notes and the rewritten piano part (Cortot defends his rewritings in his essay on the concerto reprinted in the accompanying booklet) for the musical spirit of the interpretation. Landon Ronald was a famous accompanist, no less sympathetic with a baton than at the keyboard; there is some imprecise ensemble in both these sides, but how beautifully the orchestral solos are turned, and how eloquently judged the punctuating phrases, for example in the coda of the finale! The recording is old, of course, but clear, and the piano tone is delightfully fresh and crisp.

It is well paired with the Franck set, which was an equally famous performance; here one can admire particularly the singing legato of Cortot's line and, as with the Schumann, the address in his performance. As so often with these historical reissues the years have brought about a change in interpretative taste, less marked in Schumann than in Bach, but still clearly perceptible. Cortot's style is more possessive, more body and soul, than we favour nowadays, but when you hear these sets again you wonder if we haven't lost something. The transfers are pleasant to listen to, marred only occasionally by a fleck which breaks the continuity of piano tone.

The booklet, by the by, contains portraits of Cortot and the Schumanns, essays on the interpretation of the two works by Cortot himself, and some unprofitable analytical essays by Marcel Beaufils. W.S.M.

CLASSICAL REISSUES

An irresistible "Highlights" disc is that from the Columbia *Fledermaus* set—surely a record guaranteed to give pleasure to all who hear it (33CX1516). There is a good deal on it. First, the quite long Overture, with the *Philharmonia* under **Karajan** in perfect form. Then the Act 1 Trio of Farewell, "So muss allein ich bleiben", with **Schwarzkopf**, **Gedda** and **Rita Streich**. Then Alfred's "Trinke, Liebchen", going right on to the end of the Act, and so including "Mein Herr, was dächten sie von mir"; Schwarzkopf's splendidly disconcerted "Ein Abschiedskuss!", and the trio "Sein schönes grosses Vogelhaus". Then a Laughing Song delightfully turned by Rita Streich, at the end of which she puts in a charming burst of "natural" laughter to an arpeggio above the chorus: a pretty effect kin to the laugh over an arpeggio of B flat which Lotte Lehmann introduced into Frau Fluth's aria in *The Merry Wives* (and which, I like to think, Strauss heard, remembered, and then wrote for the Prima Donna in *Ariadne*). Then "Dieser Anstand", then Schwarzkopf's full-spirited, lustrous Csardas, going on without break to Orlofsky's praise of Champagne, "Herr Chevalier, ich grüsse Sie", and "Brüderlein". From the Third Act we have Adele's "Spiel' ich die Unschuld vom Lande", prettily sung and with character, and beautifully accompanied by Karajan, and then the Finale. **Helmut Krebs** is the Alfred, **Erich Kunz** the Falke, and **Karl Dönch** the Frank. The only flaw is the

Orlofsky: sung not by a blasé mezzo, but by a tenor, **Rudolf Christ**, who sounds all too naturalistically world-wearied. I have gone into some detail about the contents of this record because the listing on the sleeve does not suggest all that is on it; and I imagine that William Mann must have written his otherwise excellent note without having heard a pressing, since he skates over what happens after the first number of each titled sequence.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf is heard again in four Schubert songs on Columbia SEL1582. This is from the LP recital in which she was joined by Edwin Fischer: but in fact the promising combination did not yield one of her very best records. Still, these are four lovely songs—*Auf dem Wasser zu singen*, with its Impromptu-like accompaniment, *Der Musensohn*, *Im Frühling* and *Nachtsolten*—and the record is an attractive, if not an outstanding one.

When **Antonietta Stella** made her Puccini recital on ALPI428, she was a promising rather than a first-rate soprano. The chief attraction of H.M.V. 7ER5092, taken from this disc, is Minnie's aria (from *La Fanciulla del West*), "Laggiù nel Soledad"; there are more accomplished versions of "Un bel dì", "Mi chiamano Mimì" and "O mio babbino caro" to be found. Columbia SEG7808 contains four excerpts drawn from the Anthology of English Church Music, second and third series, sung by the **Choir of Canterbury Cathedral** under **Gerald Knight**. Christopher Tye's simple setting of "O come ye servants of the Lord" (an adaptation by Fellowes of a fragment from his setting of the first fourteen chapters of *The Acts*) comes off well; so does John Hilton I's "Lord for thy tender mercy's sake", apart from a last chord badly out of tune. The third short anthem on this side, Tallis's "Salvator mundi", is a failure, since it is poorly recorded, and what comes out is a wavery cooing sound. English boys seem unable to produce firm, solid tone; and the Samuel Wesley anthem on side 2, "Sing aloud with gladness" (a long unaccompanied piece, with a cruel moment for the choir at the end when the organ bursts in to test their pitch), sounds spineless, and lacking in firmness of outline.

Alessandro Valente, I learn, invented one of the most successful curtain-runners in use today—this in addition to being a plum-label tenor who enjoyed a curious vogue in the 'thirties. He was the first to record "Nessun dorma", from *Turandot*, and in 1953, after a broadcast of the record, H.M.V. found there was such a demand for it that they reissued it (on red label this time). Now we have four titles on a 45 disc, 7EG8309. The *Turandot* ones are satisfactory, though not in any way special. "O Paradiso" is poor—not altogether Signor Valente's fault, I suspect, for there is something very odd about the recording which made me think that either I or my machine was losing sense of pitch. The fault is in the disc however. Valente makes a shot at "Celeste Aida", and doesn't do too badly at it. A.P.

In the course of reissuing, over the last few months, many titles previously available on the Columbia label, Philips have often been able to offer the buyer the original music with a new degree of convenience and economy in format. Without loss of quality two old ten-inch sides have often reappeared as one twelve-inch; and two old twelve-inches as two new ten-inches (even occasionally as just one new twelve-inch side). On a new Philips ten-inch label, the GBR series, the first release seems to represent to some extent a reversal of this policy. The records are all good ones, and are said to have particularly attractive four-colour sleeves; but, with the new label selling at 27s. 10d., reference back to the original disc (often Philips's own, and very much still available) and what it offers will usually be found by a potential buyer to be far from an academic exercise.

An outstanding case, perhaps, is that of GBR6506 and 6507. Philips GBR6506 offers the Mozart D major Violin Concerto, K.218, played by **David Oistrakh** with the **Philadelphia Orchestra** under **Eugene Ormandy**. The performance is first-class; so good, indeed, that it would seem churlish to complain of a slightly large-scale orchestral sound and mildly inflated cadenzas. The recording is very good indeed. GBR6507 offers the same performers in the Mendelssohn concerto. This, too, is a good performance, and well recorded, except for a balance which tends to favour the soloist rather too strongly, at times substantially so. Both these discs may be recommended; yet even more so may the original from which they are taken, Philips ABL3145. For at 41s. 9d. this 12-inch coupling of the two concertos should surely be considered carefully in the light of his own requirements by any potential buyer. It has, of course, too, the advantage of presenting the Mendelssohn without a rather unhappy turnover during the bassoon's long-held note.

GBR6508 reissues in a good quality of sound the performance of the Mozart **Jupiter Symphony** **Beecham** and the **Royal Philharmonic** gave originally for Columbia. Beautifully turned in every respect, it yet still seems mannered in a few details: the minuet, in particular, is given an unusually slow (though not ponderous) reading. Two more Mozart symphonies, both played by the **Concertgebouw Orchestra**, come on GBR6505. No. 40, the G minor, is conducted by **van Beinum**, who gives an agreeable but rather stolid reading of the work. The recording is well-toned, but characterised by a strong prominence given to the part of the first bassoon (beautifully played). Only the first three movements of this G minor symphony can be accommodated by the first side of the disc, which turns, somewhat unhappily, for the finale. It then runs on to the Mozart 26th Symphony in E flat, K.184, one of the earlier overture-type symphonies in three short movements (or one tripartite movement, according to taste). Of this **Karl Böhm** conducts a fine performance, recorded without the ill-balance which somewhat mars the major work.

Beethoven, too, is represented in this new series by a symphony, the Eighth, in F major, on GBR6501 (originally complete on the odd side of the two-disc Ninth Symphony set). **Paul van Kempen** conducts the **Berlin Philharmonic**, and manages to give the work a rather more seemingly heavyweight symphonic stature than is usually the case. But if this is not felt to be a drawback, no other aspect of the performance is likely to be; for the orchestral playing is of the very first class, with the most beautifully blended wind tone, richly recorded into the bargain.

If I have seemed to suggest that the spacing of all these records is something less than ideal, let me now gladly admit to that of GBR6503 being exactly right. It couples two Beethoven piano sonatas, No. 8, the *Pathétique*, and No. 14, the *Moonlight*. They are played in a clear, unexaggerated style by **Hans Richter-Haaser**. The wider sweeps of emotion, if required, must be sought elsewhere—so perhaps must the very richest of recordings; yet this clean sound is very satisfying.

Last of this new Philips label to reach me is GBR6504, the Schumann Piano Concerto. **Clara Haskil** is the soloist, and the **Hague Philharmonic** is conducted by **Willem van Otterloo**. None of these contributors lingers over the music with affection; indeed the solo oboe and clarinet of the orchestra repay the opportunities Schumann most unusually gives them by sounding actively unsympathetic. The recording is satisfactory, though perhaps not quite so rich as on the other reissues of this series.

Towards the end of his life Dvořák wrote a series of five orchestral symphonic poems based on folk-legends; agreeable works that have not received much attention from the gramophone. Two of them, *The Golden Spinning Wheel* and *The Wild Dove*, are now coupled on Supraphon LPV6. The legends themselves are gruesome: the golden spinning wheel is exchanged for the eyes and limbs of a girl murdered by her step-mother; the cooing of the wild dove drives to suicide a widow who in desperation had poisoned her husband. But to listen to Dvořák's music unarm'd with chapter and verse references to its parent legends is to hear only the forests, the fields, the hunting horns, the young lovers, and the humming spinning-wheels of Czech romance; and this is surely an agreeable thing to do. Dvořák specialists could hardly fail to welcome this disc of otherwise unobtainable music warmly; it is quite well (though not very forwardly) recorded, and most beautifully played by the **Czech Philharmonic** under **Václav Talich**.

Having provided nearly all the LP reissues of the month, Philips now go on to provide the bulk of the 45s. The whole of the **Brahms St. Anthony Variations** may seem an improbable contribution to the repertory of this format; yet here they are on Philips ABE10056, complete and uncut even to the extent of a repeat. Bargain-hunters, though, should leap only with caution; for although the performance of the **New York Philharmonic** under **Bruno Walter** is quite



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BEETHOVEN

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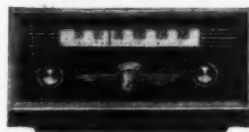
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adequate, the recording tends to the shrill in string tone until towards the end, when (understandably) it fades somewhat in general. Philips's recording is not at its best, either, for Tchaikovsky's 1812 *Overture* on ABE10054. This music depends enormously, towards the climax, on a torrent of overwhelming sound; here, in spite of assistance from a powerful set of bells, the sound is scarcely overwhelming. **Paul van Kempen** conducts the **Concertgebouw Orchestra** in a reading more noticeable for attack than breadth; and the turn-over point seems to me to come just a bar too late.

Another attempt to divide the indivisible is made with Ravel's *Bolero* on ABE10036. At first I thought again that the first side ended a bar too late; but the second side put matters right—in a sense—by starting again a bar back where the break should have been made in the first place. The nature of the music, though, really demands continuity quite imperatively; not least in this good performance by **Eugene Ormandy** and the **Philadelphia Orchestra**, with a steady pulse and a uniform crescendo throughout. The recording, too, is rather better than previously. So it is, for the same orchestra and conductor, on ABE10057. This offers a suite from Handel's *Water Music*. The movements are familiar from Harty's arrangement, but the scoring here is Ormandy's. So, by Jupiter, is some of the conducting; in places it seems a long way removed from what Handel must have expected.

Two altogether better Philips 45s come from **Willem van Otterloo** and the **Hague Philharmonic**. ABE10052 couples the *Egmont* and *Coriolanus* overtures of Beethoven, played strongly and forthrightly, and well recorded. The opening of *Egmont* is particularly impressive; its close a little less so, sounding not quite so triumphant as is possible. Even better recording, though, is accorded ABE10051. On this the Grieg *Peer Gynt* Suite No. 2 is given a most beautiful performance by the Dutch players, with no excitement lacking at all. For *Solveig's Song* the orchestra is joined by **Erna Spoorenberg**, and the vocal performance (in German) of this movement makes a splendid climax to the suite, marred only by a background hum which is in evidence for this part of the music. It is the only blemish on a first-class disc.

On ABE10059 are assembled three popular movements from the chamber music repertoire, played by members of the **Budapest Quartet**. The *Serenade* from Haydn's early F major Quartet is no stranger to this kind of work; but it does here sound off-hand. Less so the *Canzonetta* from Mendelssohn's First Quartet; least so the variations from the Schubert *Trout* Quintet, for which the Budapest players are joined by **Mieczyslaw Horszowski** and **Georges Moleux**. The attack even on this movement, though, is somewhat on the rough side, and the bass to the recording is noticeably weak.

The last Philips is rather a good one: ABE10061, coupling the Second and Third Ballades of Chopin in sound performances

by **Cor de Groot**. Something is missed by the pianist, perhaps, of the *sotto voce* demand made of him in opening the Second Ballade, and towards the end of this the recording has some clanging moments; but the Third Ballade goes very well indeed.

H.M.V., too, offer a piano reissue: **Shura Cherkassky** playing the Schubert A flat *Impromptu* (Op. 90, No. 4) and Liszt A minor *Hungarian Rhapsody* (No. 13) on 7ER5094. Both pieces are happily extracted from LPs in which they were originally not quite wholly in place. The Schubert seems to me to be given a rather unexpectedly prosaic performance; but the Liszt most

certainly is not—the Rhapsody is itself one of the most Hungarian of all, and is here turned very deftly indeed. The recording, though, is not quite of the fullest; and neither side of the review copy has a good surface.

Finally, a most agreeable Pye 45: NEC23006, a *Coppélia* Suite played by the **Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra** under **Sir Adrian Boult**. It includes the *Prélude*, *Mazurka*, *Czardas*, *Entr'acte*, and *Valse lente*; all of them among the best-known of Delibes's tunes. The playing does not quite give every point to the music; but the recording is rather good. M.M.

STEREO SEEN PERSONALLY

By REID A. RAILTON

A TREMENDOUS lot is being written just now in American magazines about the advent of stereo tapes and discs, and the effect it is likely to have upon the people who like to listen to recorded music, both classical and otherwise. Most of this literature is concerned with the alterations and additions which these people will have to make to their existing "Hi-Fi's" (their revolting but almost universal name for a good gramophone) to enable them to "go stereo". There seems to be no doubt that, by the end of this year, a lot of the music now available on stereo tape will also be available on discs. Judging by the sample stereo discs that have already been demonstrated, their musical quality will be about as faithful to the original tape as are the conventional records of today; in other words, some will be very good, and others not so good. The "stereo effect" will be just as good (or bad) as that of the tape.

One aspect of the situation, about which not much has been said, is the question of the extent to which conventional monaural records will be rendered obsolete by the stereo boom. People are wondering how long the manufacturers will continue to make the old discs, and the manufacturers, at least while they continue to have stocks on hand, are naturally not telling. The probability is that they don't know themselves, but the fact remains that, all over the U.S., records are being sold today at cut-rate prices, in an obvious attempt to reduce stocks before stereo really gets going. However that may be, the question which is principally exercising the minds of serious listeners is whether stereo will prove to be so good that they will never want to listen to their old records again. There is, at least in America, a lot of confused thinking on this point, and your readers may be interested to learn what the outlook there appears to be.

To start with, let us take a look at the LP discs that are on sale in the record shops today. The American Schwann catalogue lists upwards of twenty thousand recordings of classical pieces alone. It includes practically everything of significance that has ever been composed, and the better-known pieces are represented by many different interpretations of varying age,

quality and taste. For the purposes of comparison with modern stereo tapes, and from the standpoint of the fidelity of the reproduction, at least half of the list can be ruled out on the score of age alone. Technical know-how has improved, and is improving so rapidly, that anything recorded before, say, 1953 is hopelessly handicapped by comparison with the techniques available today, and the question boils down to how the many thousands of records made in the last five years are going to compare with the stereo discs of tomorrow.

Nobody can have done much serious listening to modern records without being struck by one outstanding phenomenon, namely, the extraordinary disparity in the musical quality of modern recordings, not only as between different makers, but also between consecutive issues of the same manufacturer. One might suppose that one company, having succeeded in producing one superb recording of one group of musicians, could go on to achieve the same perfection in another performance of the same group, playing under the same conditions. It simply is not so. The next recording is often a comparative flop. Again, one might anticipate that the large and old-established manufacturers, with their great resources and their long background of experience, would be the ones to produce most frequently the near-perfect record for which we all yearn. Again, this simply doesn't happen—at least in America. There are at least eight or ten labels before the public there that have now and then come up with outstanding winners, and about the only feature that these winners appear to have in common is that they have, more often than not, been recorded in Europe. One is therefore driven to the conclusion that the production of a near-perfect recording still involves a large element of luck.

It is, of course, impossible to say what percentage of the records in the catalogue achieve this status of near-perfection, since their choice must be a matter of individual taste: but, for any given individual, it is doubtful whether as much as five per cent of the records being produced today would meet that individual's standards of near-perfection. In other words, the average

listener would rate less than one in twenty as being really superb.

Now, for anyone who feels that this generalisation is even approximately true, it has a very real bearing on how he will feel about the new stereo tapes and discs. No fundamental improvement in the recording art has suddenly taken place such as might make the percentage of first-class stereo recordings any higher than it is with conventional records. In fact to some extent the reverse is the case, since the technique of stereo recording is still so immature as to provide an additional obstacle in the path of success. Several stereo tapes have come on the market, recording performances already available on conventional discs, where the disc is definitely the better of the two.

This all adds up to the conclusion that if, to the perceptive listener, only five per cent of the new stereo releases are going to rate in the near-perfect class, it is going to take him a long time (and a lot of money) to collect a stereo library that will satisfy him completely.

Of course it is true that stereo very definitely "has something". It has quite a lot. For those who wish to listen to a railway train running through a station it is terrific. For a large symphony orchestra and for choral work it is, at its best, incomparably better than any monaural reproduction. Even for solo performances it provides an indefinable "something" which, again at its best, is attractive, though the attraction may well lie chiefly in the novelty of the sensation, and may prove to wear off rather quickly. What is quite certain is that, with stereo, the violins are just as liable to screech in the fortissimo passages, the middle range of the piano is just as likely to sound like a spinet, and orchestral tutti may sound just as muddy as they do on the not-so-perfect records to today.

In appraising the merits of stereo there is one obvious factor which is often overlooked, namely, that it is nearly always heard on playback equipment of the latest and most expensive kind. This equipment may or may not have better fidelity than the monaural system to which the listener is accustomed, but at any rate it is *different*, and furthermore, the sound emerges from two speakers. This by itself may make it sound attractive. The acid test is, of course to cut out one sound track, and to channel the other into both speakers, switching back and forth from one to the other. On the best stereo tapes, particularly with orchestral pieces, the difference is unmistakable, and even dramatic, but it is surprising how many stereo tapes there are where it is difficult to tell whether one or both tracks are in use (provided someone else is working the switch). It is even more surprising to find that quite a few sound slightly better on the single track!

Of course, stereo is the coming thing. Of course the handful of near-perfect tapes that exist today represents the most faithful reproduction of the real thing that has so far been heard, whatever the shortcomings of the original performances may have been. Of course in (say) five years' time the

monaural disc will be obsolete, so far as fidelity of reproduction is concerned. On the other hand, what seems equally certain is that, unless the manufacturers can greatly exceed their present five per cent average of hits to misses, it is going to take them a long time to produce any considerable

library of stereo recordings that will bear comparison with the *best* of the present-day records. It also seems certain that, until that time comes, the perceptive listener will continue to be dependent upon his own personal collection of the many superb records that are available today.

PASSING NOTES

By ARTHUR JACOBS

Most of our English composers are only too grateful when any of their works become available in recorded form. It says something for the extraordinary success of **Malcolm Arnold** that I found him concerned about too many recordings of the same work. His *English Dances*, complete, are available on H.M.V. under Robert Irving (reviewed in these pages in June), on Decca under Boult, and in America conducted by himself. Now, I gather, another American company proposes to record them, and he wonders why.

These *English Dances*, by the way, were the bright idea of a publisher who sought a parallel to Dvořák's *Slaonic Dances*. They are, of course, only one of the works which show Arnold's flair for the popular touch. I wonder when we shall hear a record of his recent *Toy Symphony*, in which the Lord Mayor of London participated at a performance in the Mansion House last month. This is a fit stable-mate (or nursery-mate) for the famous *Toy Symphony* which we used to ascribe to Haydn until the discovery that it is by Leopold Mozart.

Arnold is currently writing a viola concerto for **William Primrose**. In talking about his Oscar-winning film score for *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, I congratulated him on not giving it a sentimental theme-tune, ready to be fitted with words as a "pop" tune afterwards. ("Something like 'I'll kwai for you?'" suggested Arnold.) But, curiously, he did create a hit-tune out of his treatment of *Colonel Bogey*; reports reach me of its enormous vogue in France, Germany, and the U.S.A.

Arnold tells me that his first knowledge of the new Philips EP of the film music (reviewed on page 119 of this issue), conducted by himself, was when an admirer asked him to autograph it. As the disc was taken direct from the soundtrack of the film, he had not been consulted about it.

When, in June, I drew readers' attention to **Van Cliburn**, I suggested that we might first hear this young American pianist on a Russian record-label—as a result of his winning the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. But when he was in London a few weeks ago, Van Cliburn told me that he had stipulated in his Russian contract that records made in Russia were to be used for the Soviet market only. That, of course, is why his first disc to be released here—Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1, reviewed on page 105—appears on an R.C.A. label and was made in New York. Cliburn's London concert, incidentally, was sensationally good. It also served to introduce to London the Russian conductor **Kirill P. Kondrashin**, to whom the Albert Hall was no kinder than it is to anyone else. Kondrashin, who conducted in Cliburn's prize-winning appearance in Moscow, also conducts the new recording.

From Aldeburgh to Edinburgh goes **Charles Mackerras**, whose recent record of Verdi overtures was reviewed in our June issue. At

the Edinburgh Festival, Mackerras will conduct the new ballet company with the linguistically curious name of Ballets Premières, which will be accompanied by a chamber orchestra of fifteen players. For this combination, Mackerras tells me he is doing a special orchestration (yet another!) of Alfvén's *Midsummer Vigil*, more widely known simply as *Swedish Rhapsody*.

The qualities of **Tibor Varga's** violin-playing have been appreciated on such records as that of Mozart's concerto in B flat, in which he plays his own cadenza. But when he came to London for concerts a few months ago, he was received by the public as almost a stranger. What a surprise it was, therefore, to learn that he is in fact a British citizen and lived here from 1947 (after leaving Hungary) until 1954. But, he told me, he failed to find work here: "It may well be that my requests to some of the British conductors whom I greatly admire never passed the secretary's desk." He got more and more engagements from the Continent, and so has now gone to live in Switzerland. But I note that the B.B.C., which engaged him for a Promenade Concert in 1950, has invited him back to the Proms.

With **Geraint Jones** conducting and **Thomas Hemsley** among the singers, Deutsche Grammophon has just made its first recording in England. The music was drawn from the English side of Handel, and will form a contribution to the company's Archive series. Geraint Jones brought his own mid-eighteenth-century organ to the recording studio, though this time not playing it himself. The performance was recorded stereophonically as well as in the normal way: Deutsche Grammophon intend to introduce stereo records within the next few months, like the major British companies. Thomas Hemsley (the English baritone, now working much in German opera houses) and Geraint Jones both participate in a Bach recording for H.M.V. which was reviewed last month.

The literature in English on Schubert is immense, but a place must certainly be found for *Schubert: A Critical Biography*, learnedly but vividly written by Maurice J. E. Brown (Macmillan, 30s.). It has musical examples, and exhaustive lists of works which will be of value to record-collectors. The most striking feature of its text is the detailed debunking of Schubert legends—such as the alleged composition of *Hark! hark! the lark!* in a beer garden. ("This 'dashing-off' of songs and overtures is the non-musical person's idea of how a composer goes to work", Mr. Brown comments.)

Harry Newstone—a conductor whom we must call a Londoner, despite his Canadian birth—tells me that he recently did a recording session in Hamburg from midnight to 4 a.m. This was the only time that both the hall and

the musicians were available. Orchestral recording sessions in Britain are normally of three hours, and I understand that not more than twenty minutes' music may be recorded at one session—a rule which, Newstone believes, may lead English record companies to favour German studios with their four-hour sessions, especially for a work just over twenty minutes in length. It is good, anyway, to see Newstone

in demand: his new Decca disc was reviewed here last month, and his recording of Mozart's *Jupiter Symphony* four years ago, on the now extinct Monarch label, won remarkably high praise in these pages.

Arthur Jacobs has left for a visit to the United States and Canada, and the next issue will contain his transatlantic "Passing Notes".

NIGHTS AT THE ROUND TABLE

By W. A. CHISLETT

So many records of the music of the Strauss family are now available that a detailed comparison would involve a very long article. Of 12-inch selections the latest is called "Vienna Bonbons" and is played by the **Vienna Symphony Orchestra** under **Paulik** (Vanguard PVL7066). I am working from a white label test pressing and so am not sure in what language the titles will be printed, so I will use those in **THE GRAMOPHONE** Classical Record Catalogue in cases where there are previous recordings—*Sphärenklänge*, *Wiener Bonbons*, *Wo die Zitronen blühen* and *Rosen aus dem Suden waltzen*, *Egyptian March*, *Tik-tak Polka* and *Banditentango*. In addition there is *L'Enfantillage* which is a *Polka française* and so far as I know has not been recorded on LP before. All are by Johann II except the first which is Josef's best-known waltz. This is a very desirable disc in the authentic Viennese style finely played and very well recorded.

Bruno Walter has been one of the great Strauss conductors for more than half a century. On Philips GBR6510 with the **Columbia Symphony Orchestra**, a specially selected body of instrumentalists, he gives us four of the most famous waltzes of Johann II—*Blue Danube*, *Emperor*, *Tales of the Vienna Woods* and *Vienna Blood*. While all these are first rate I am particularly grateful for the *Emperor* because Herr Walter, unlike many conductors, does not omit the meditative and leisurely postlude which rounds off and gives a perfect balance to this most lovely of waltzes. The first and last of these are also available in EP form (ABE10055).

On another EP the **Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra** under **Leinsdorf** give us good measure in the shape of the *Sugar Plum Fairy*, Russian, Arabian and Chinese Dances, the Dance of the Flutes and the Waltz of the Flowers from Tchaikovsky's *Casse Noisette Suite* (Fontana CFE15009). Playing and recording are both good but not especially so. Surely therefore this is an optimistic issue so far as England is concerned when there are so many excellent versions already available in various sizes and speeds.

Last month M.M. in his review of the first release of Pye stereo discs found the "Savoy Dances" which are included with some Gilbert and Sullivan overtures on CSML73000 in performances by **Stanford Robinson** and the **Pro Arte Orchestra** to sound more spacious than on the previously issued monaural EP made from the same performance. I cannot say the same about two new EPs of the Overtures—*Mikado* and *Iolanthe* (CEM36006) and *Cox and Box*, *Patience* and *Yeomen of the Guard* (CEM36008)—though these two are the same performances as those on the stereo disc. The latter gives substantial directional effect but the tonal quality of the monaural EPs is more natural. I do not think that this is of any significance however. One remembers that

some of the early LPs were not altogether satisfactory and later LPs made from the same tapes were much better.

"Vodka, Moscow and You" contains a dozen orchestral arrangements of popular Russian music, all traditional except Rubinstein's *Melody in F* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Dance of the Tumblers* (Felsted PDL85048). Of the traditional items the best known are *The Song of the Volga Boatmen*, *Black Eyes* and *Two Guitars*. They are played by **Wal Berg and his Orchestra** and the arrangements are the conductor's own. There is plenty of variety here and several instruments not usually present in an orchestra are effectively featured in places. It makes very pleasant background listening, for which purpose I imagine it to have been designed.

Now for a bunch of records of film tracks and shows, and on the whole a pretty dull lot they are. The music (all orchestral) from the 20th Century-Fox CinemaScope production *The Young Lions* conveys nothing to me. I have not seen the film and I find the music without action boring. Moreover the reproduction has that hard quality that is often associated with dubbings from film tracks (Bruns. LAT8252). *Windjammer* is the first presentation in CinemaScope and is more interesting. The story of the film gives scope for great variety. Even this however, would never be a candidate for one of my Desert Island discs (Philips BBL7250). When I first put on *Desire under the Elms* I jumped out of my chair to be sure I hadn't put it on at 45 instead of 33. It improved as it went on and I like best the name tune and the Scottish-flavoured "Ephraim's Dance". The music reminded me sometimes of that of Ketelby. Again the reproduction has some of the hard "film track" quality (London HA-D2111).

Carmen Jones is also a film track recording and presumably the same as H.M.V. CLP1034 (reviewed by "Harlequin" in April 1955). Presentation and performance are full of life and fire and the whole performance carries conviction. There is no monkeying with Bizet's music, only with the libretto of Meilhac and Halévy (R.C.A. RD27074). Excerpts from the M.G.M. film *The Merry Widow* have nothing to commend them at all (M.G.M. EP654). Everything about this record seems wrong to me, particularly hearing "Vilja" sung by a man; and the fact that I had seen and heard the Sadler's Wells production of this charming operetta a few days previously did not make this grotesquerie any easier to bear. Why does not some company record the Sadler's Wells production? It is first rate, and the English dialogue, which is quite amusing, would suit many people better than the German dialogue in the fine Columbia complete recording. Much better are excerpts from Romberg's *Student Prince* which is not a film track recording and has **Rise Stevens** and **Nelson Eddy** as

soloists. The latter is mouthing his words more than he used to do and the rhythms are a bit four-square and stodgy in places.

Back to film tracks, and a good one this time both in quality of recording and content. It is *The Bridge on the River Kwai* for which **Malcolm Arnold** has written some appropriate and entertaining music and in which is incorporated the ever-popular *Colonel Bogey March* (Philips BBE12194). The excerpts include, in addition to this march, those suggesting pride in the great bridge, and the camp concert. Mr. Arnold is developing into one of the best of composers of light and illustrative music and makes even commonplace themes interesting by his skill in using them and his gift of orchestration.

Interest in folk-music continues to grow, if the number of records issued month by month is any guide. Percy Grainger's orchestral arrangements of *Shepherd's Hey*, *Molly on the Shore*, *Mock Morris* and the *Londonderry Air* are models of their kind and are played with the greatest affection by the **Hallé Orchestra** under **Sir John Barbirolli** on Pye CEC32022.

Coming to vocals there are several that are very desirable, but most of all I have enjoyed a group of German "Folksongs" on D.G.G. EPL30222. The sleeve describes the artists as the **Eschwege Singers** conducted by **Kristine Biechtler** (although some of the items are instrumental and others are accompanied) and does not give us any other information at all. D.G.G. EP sleeves are frequently irritating in this respect. Many of the songs are new to me but all are delightful. Here is the list of titles on this treasure of a record: *Jeden Morgen geht die Sonne auf*, *Es tagt der Sonne Morgenstrahl*, *Der Winter ist vergangen*, *Im Marzen der Bauer*, *Wie schön blüht uns der Maien*, *Ich freu' mich auf die Blumen*, *Steh'n zwei Stern' am hohen Himmel*, *Es dunkelt schon in der Heide*, *Hinunter ist der Sonnen Schein*, *Der Mond ist aufgegangen*.

When discussing a previous record by **Mary O'Hara** I said that she reminded me more than a little of Richard Hayward, which is praise indeed for any Irish folk or ballad singer. I still feel this beneficent influence in her new LP disc "Love Songs of Ireland" (Beltona LBE20). Her voice is beautifully fresh, she uses it with a seeming artlessness which is really an art which conceals art, and nothing could be happier or more appropriate than her harp accompaniments. Particularly enchanting are *I know where I am going*, *I will walk with my love* and *Beidh anach Amairéach*. The other titles are: *Deonaidi*, *My Brown Haired Boy*, *The Stuttering Lovers*, *Ballinderry*, *Da Bfaigean Mo Rogha*, *Believe me if all those endearing young charms*, *Anonn's Anall*, *The Minstrel Boy*, *Paddy's Wife*, *I know my Love*, *An Raibh tu ag a' Gearraig*, *Love's young dream*, *Gaelic Hymn in Praise of the Mother of God*.

Freshness of voice is also one of the many attractions of "Folk Songs of England, Scotland and Wales" (which incidentally also includes one from Ireland) sung by the **Hywel Girls Choir** conducted by **John Hywel Williams** with **Michael Jefferies**, harpist (Delysé ECB3144). This choir, made up of girls from the local schools, shops and works of Llanelly has made a name for itself in several European countries. Many of the songs are sung in Welsh, and it is good therefore that with the record is a leaflet giving the original words with epitomes of the English meanings. There are twenty-one titles in all, covering nearly every mood and emotion. The famous lament *Dafydd Garreg Wen*, *All through the Night*, the *Silver Swan* of Orlando Gibbons, *Under the Greenwood Tree* and *Follow me down to Carlow* are among the plums of this enormously enjoyable collection. The last song is not that bearing the same title which is included in the recent

Delysé record of the Gunn family. This is gay whereas that sung by Hugh Gunn is the reverse.

After Mary O'Hara and the Hywel Choir, **George Beverly Shea** in a group of religious songs sounds very chromium plated, but in fairness it must be said that the plate is of the best quality (R.C.A. RS50001).

Far better do I like **Kenneth Spencer** in *Oh! Susanna, Ma Curly-Headed Baby, Carry me back to old Virginny and Camptown Races*. He has a grand rich bass voice and it is supported by an excellent chorus. He sings with conviction and in this and other respects, too, reminds me more than a little of Paul Robeson when in his prime, not that he copies Robeson (Col. SEG7804). In a different way I also find **Mel Todd** attractive. His voice is light, his style is unaffected and he also sings with conviction. His songs, on two Envoy EPs (EVP101 and 102), includes folk and pseudo (in the inoffensive sense) folk songs from Ireland, America and his native Canada. Mr. Todd worked for a time in a record store in Vancouver, and it was hearing a record by Jo Stafford which started him collecting and singing folk songs himself. His voice will be familiar to many readers by his songs in the TV "Robin Hood" programmes.

Cassell and Co. are about to publish a book, "The Folk Songs of North America". Some of the songs in this book together with one or two others are recorded in "American Song Train, Vol. 1", by **Alan Lomax, Peggy**

Seeger, Guy Carawan, John Cole and Sammy Stokes (Nixa NPL18013). Again one senses conviction in the singing and playing and integrity in the arrangements. The sleeve notes give much useful and interesting information on the origin of the songs, where and by whom they were taken down, etc.

It is amusing to read on the sleeve note of Philips BBR8103—"Just a Song"—that the **Norman Luboff Choir** "now turns its talents to the songs of America" and then to find included among the eight songs *Drink to me only with thine eyes* ("first published in America in 1789") and *Auld Lang Syne*. Songs that are popular in America, and deservedly so, they may be, but to claim them as songs of America is surely a bit naive. The choir, as always, sings very well, and in the main the arrangements are attractive although occasionally one feels them to be rather straining after effect. Philips have a flair for producing really good children's records. Their latest, also one of their best, gives us **Burl Ives** in *The little white duck, The lollipop tree, Mr. Froggie went a-courtin' and The little engine that could* (BBE12175).

In May Columbia issued three EPs called "Changing the Guard at the Palais Royal, Brussels" each containing four marches of famous regiments of the Belgian Army (SEGC 27-29). Eight of the twelve titles with two more added, *Marche du 11^e Regiment de Ligne Belge* and *Marche du 1^{er} Regiment des Lanciers*, are now released on a ten-inch LP, 33CS1130.

shop) and *Koko Maney*, the title of which is uttered in a weird voice on a distort-mike in between musical allusions to the Volga boatmen; and, for a relief, the piano work of **Roger Williams** (London HAR2105) against an effective but not obtrusive rhythm section in *It's A Big, Wide, Wonderful World*, tunes from all over the place, and from the same artist, this time with a rather gritty orchestra, on London HLR8643*, the theme song of the film "Indiscreet" and a snugly new song, *Young And Warm And Wonderful*. (This is also recorded pleasingly enough, with marimbas in the supporting orchestra, on Philips PB831*, by **Tony Bennett**. The reverse is a dreary nondescript moaner.)

Returning home, **Ron Goodwin** (Parlo. GEP8684) provides four tunes about the sea in his usual excellently polished manner; the **Strollers**, armed (like Moe Koffman above) with this year's fashionable instrument, the flute, play *Jumping With Symphony Sid* and *Swinging Yellow Rose Of Texas*, both sides very much over-recorded (Vogue V9113*); **Leo Diamond** and his harmonica, still suggesting a mellow alto sax. at times, gives eight standard pops on Col. SEG7794 and SEG7798, but I don't like the banshee wailing that he goes in for; and **David Carroll** has an impudent new number, *Ducky*, on Mercury MT216*. With its wa-wa trumpet and jaunty beat, it sounds like something Clyde McCoy might have done years ago. The reverse is the fine old tune *Do You Ever Think Of Me?* but this slow rock version is spoiled by too-powerful saxes.

As usual, there are plenty of lengthy piano records, as well as the standards of this type. **Walter Gross** (H.M.V. 7EG8349) plays what are described as "his own great songs" to an all-star modern-jazz accompaniment, but it's all rather flashy. **Winifred Atwell** (Decca F11036*) pounds away at *The Woodchoppers' Ball and Lazy Train*, supported by a full-sized band, which makes exciting listening in a mechanical way, and **Emil Stern** goes one better (or worse) in the line of broken-down pianos on Felsted PDL86044 in a set called *Fun In The Sun*, mostly oldies or tunes in the oldie manner. **Bill Snyder** on Bruns. LAT8238 offers a set called *Bewitching Hour*, more rather flashy piano in seductive tunes on midnight motifs, but the effect desired would have been more easily achieved had the whole thing not been so loud. Then there is a standard (Nixa N15147*) of *Trudie and Love Is The Sweetest Thing* by **Joe Henderson**. There is a chorus on each, but the heavy piano rather drowns it out. The former title is a cheery jingle, the latter the famous tune written by Ray Noble for Jack Payne's film "Say It With Music" in 1932, played and sung here much, much too slowly.

As a demonstration of how it and other good tunes of the late 'twenties and early 'thirties can be played nowadays without losing their nostalgia or sound dated, **Jack Payne** conducts his first recording for over ten years on H.M.V. CLP1160. There are no trumpets here. This is one of the most pleasing records I have heard in the eighteen months I have been reviewing for THE GRAMOPHONE. Another in the same category is on Mercury MPL6538, presenting *The Seasons Of Love* by **Malcolm Lockyer** and his Orchestra. Aimed at the American market, it is a credit to British arrangers and musicians—and recordists. Each season has three appropriate numbers; they are all delightful.

The big, big sound that seems very popular still is provided, of course, by **Mantovani**. On Decca LK4253 he gives us a selection of show tunes, principally of the post-war era, almost too grandly, and I'd rather take **Van Lynn's** Orchestra on Bruns. LAT8241 in their *Candlelight Melodies*, even if they are not well-known and even if they are somewhat shriller than the Troubadours, for my summer evening listening.

MISCELLANEOUS AND DANCE By JOHN OAKLAND

An asterisk following a 78 r.p.m. number indicates its availability at 45 r.p.m. The numbers are the same with the addition of the prefix "45". Where the 45 r.p.m. number is different it is given immediately after the 78 r.p.m. number.

As befits the holiday season, both Coral and Decca have issued 12-inch albums under the title *Love Letters In The Sand*, both including the song of that name, of course. The Coral (LVA9084) is by **Les Brown** and his Band of Renown, beatty and crisp with vocal solos and choruses; the Decca (LK4244) is a more romantic affair by **Frank Chacksfield** and his Orchestra.

Mr. Chacksfield has certainly been busy lately; on Decca LK4257 there is another full-length (and full-dress) collection under the title *Evening In London*, which itself makes a homely change from these ultra-exotic efforts (of which more anon). This includes all sorts of things, from *You're Blasé to Drink To Me Only*, another feather in Mr. Chacksfield's already over-crowded cap, even if *The Very Thought Of You* (yes, again) is included too. All are British songs, you see, and we should admit that this was one of Ray Noble's loveliest numbers and that no such collection is complete without it. A further Chacksfield offering is an EP (Decca DFE6456) featuring **Bobby Pratt** on trumpet in *The Nearness Of You* and other numbers in the Bobby Hackett manner—sleek and mellow.

Well, we might as well look briefly at the highly-coloured scenes of foreign parts conjured up for us by such as **Henry Krein** and the Montmartre Players on M.G.M. EP650 in four musette-acordion numbers, so verree *Frainch*, and **Norrie Paramor** in *Paris* (Col. SEG7788), which, for all its lively flawless taste and musicianship, could never be anything but British.

Travelling further afield, we have the third of **Les Baxter's** *Ports Of Pleasure*, on Cap. EAP3-868, evocative and delightful as ever, especially *City Of Veils*, and from the same superb orchestra, a fine 12-inch Capitol (T1012) of the music from "South Pacific", as great a non-vocal set as you'll get. Then from the **Rio Carnival Orchestra** (London HAF2094) we get a set of the usual stand-bys—*Brazil, Peanut Vendor, La Paloma*, and so on, played with a nice big sound without blasting, and from **Bebo Valdes** and the Havana All-Stars (Brun. LAT8232) *Holiday In Havana* gives us a long, strong dose of samey cha-cha music, very Westernised. I much preferred the more graceful and musically more interesting, un-hackneyed *Havana In Hi-Fi* on Mercury MPL6533 by **Richard Hayman** and his Orchestra. The finest string orchestra in America I consider is the **Troubadours**, who find themselves this month in *The Land Of The Gypsies* on London HAR2106, with a set of not-too-well-known tunes that make for easy listening. (They also accompany **Jane Morgan** in *All The Way*, on London GAR2110, a well-sung set that includes *April Love*, like the Chacksfield *Love Letters* disc.)

More exotics come from **Edmundo Ros** (Decca F11030*) in a Turkish flavoured number, *Saunabad*, backed by *Tipi Tipi Tipso*, a cute novelty vocal by the maestro himself; **Ganim's Asia Minors** (London HLE8637*) in two peculiar examples of Eurasian rock-'n'-roll; **Doules Dicken's** Band (London HLD8639*) in *Our Melody* (there is none worth mentioning) and *Piakukawung*, a sort of caricature of Rimsky-Korsakov's lovely *Chanson Indoue*; **Moe Koffman's Quartet** (London HLJ8633*) in *Little Pixie* (a pan-pipes solo against what sounds like a forge or a carpenter's

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R. BARSHAI, viola; **Y. SLOBODKIN**, 'cello)

Quartet No. 3—*Shostakovitch*

DIMITRI SHOSTAKOVITCH

and the BEETHOVEN QUARTET

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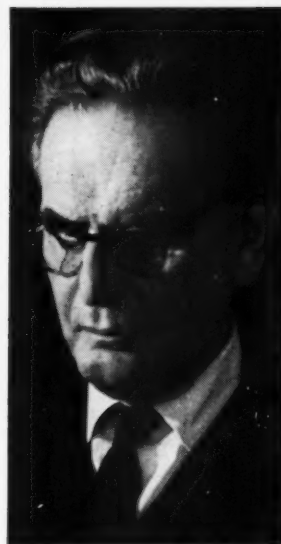
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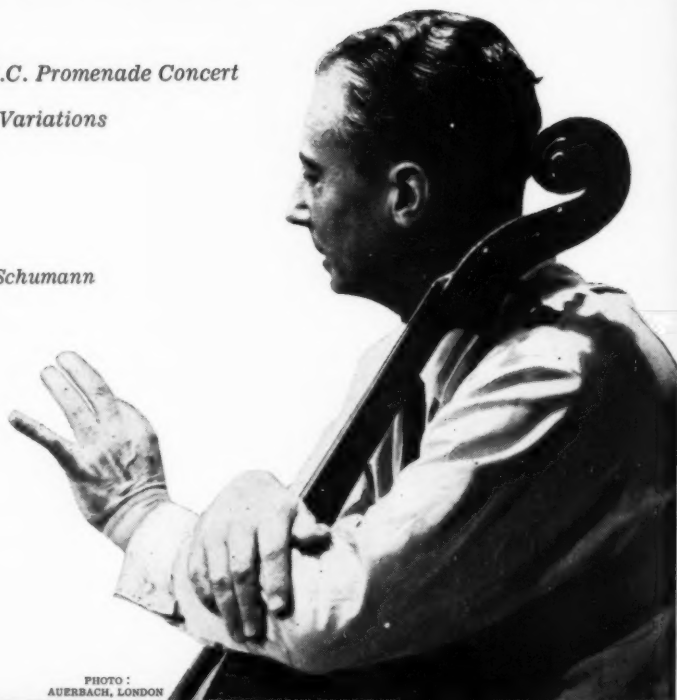


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This month's dose of nostalgia comes in the form of two 12-inch LPs by **David Rose**, who with his orchestra serves up *Songs Of The Fabulous 'Thirties*. I wouldn't have said the 'thirties were all that fabulous, except that the adjective is a much-abused one with those born in the early 'forties and hence perhaps permissible. The good old standards are all there on London HAR2084/5. **Jerry Fielding** makes another valiant attempt to bring back the big-band style of the later 'thirties on Bruns. LAT8244 with what he labels *Fielding's Formula*, with biting brass and saxes. **Pee Wee Hunt**, on the other hand, tries a peculiar experiment of taking *I Love Paris* (1954) and *Miss Otis Regrets* (1934), Cole Porter numbers both, and putting them over in the style we might have had if the mid-'twenties doo-wacka-doo business had never outgrown itself. As a result, he falls with a resounding thud between the stools of Dixieland and Modernism (Cap. 45-CL14884). But **Buddy Bregman** (H.M.V. 7EG8343) comes down smartly on the side of Modernism by playing Gershwin in the loping rhythm and advanced harmonies of that idiom. Excellent of its kind.

We can't get away from "My Fair Lady", not that we need to, as it has a worth while score; there are three more EPs of some of the main titles. **Alma Cogan** and **Ronnie Hilton** (H.M.V. 7EG8352) repeat their existing successes from the POP repertoire; the **Peter Knight Singers** sing six of the best on Parlo. GEP8676, and the **Melachro Orchestra** give a typically polished instrumental performance on H.M.V. 7EG8332.

This gives me my cue to review the rest of the vocal records. First up is what would last year have been termed a skiffler, with his usual retinue of guitars, banjos, washboard and—yes, a harmonica, which is featured copiously on *Starlite STEP5*. The artist is **Johnny Christmas**, with what he calls the Sunspots. Another erstwhile skiffler who seems to have dropped the label, not without good cause if my colleagues in the Jazz section are right, is **Betty Smith**. A cabaret singer of note, she possesses the knack of making (for me, at least) *Will The Angels Play Their Harps For Me?* (Decca F11031*) almost tolerable. The other side is a rather ordinary blues, *Betty's Blues*. Long before "skiffle" became a teenage fad, a singer named **Bill Bramwell** (who provides the kazoo and other eldritch noises on the "Candid Mike" record on Nixa) recorded *My Old Man and Shoutin' In The Amen Corner*. It was, according to the label of *Starlite ST45-004*, on January 24th, 1948. He sounds on this like a sort of boppish "Fats" Waller, quite amusing and (I would dare to say) ahead of his time. But the record that had me really laughing is Decca DFE6486. It lampoons unmercifully shows from TV such as *Six-Five Special*, *Picture Parade* and, of course, *Tommy Steele*. For it's those crazy coos **Morris and Mitch** at work. Two of these tracks were issued last summer, but it's good to have them again, especially with the added attraction of the hitherto unissued tracks.

This is British wit, 1958 model. No less brilliant, though far less rugged, is the ageless wit of **Noël Coward** as portrayed by the man himself in a further selection of his earlier successes—and one of Cole Porter's—on H.M.V. 7EG8346. American wit is represented principally by **Martha Davis** and Spouse (two real-life married Negro folk), who on H.M.V. 7EG8313 sing sophisticated numbers like "Fats" Waller and Ella Fitzgerald might have done. The spouse, **Calvin Ponder**, jabs in some neat asides while his wife does most of the singing. Intimate and friendly.

An amusing number is *Torero*, of which I have heard records by **Julius La Rosa** (R.C.A. 1063*) in a raspy rendering backed by another rocker, *Milano*, and by the **Southlanders** on

Decca F11032*, whom it suits best of all. The backing is gibberish, I'm afraid. Western singer **Ferlin Husky** (Cap. 45-CL14883) has two numbers on the subject of cars, but his take the form of sermons about bad driving. The monologue *The Drunken Driver* is positively Victorian in its harrowing preoccupation with the death of children; *East Lynne* isn't in it. The reverse, *Slow Down, Brother*, is wryly amusing. Having driven a good few thousand miles myself, I know just how timely such warnings are; but if they are to be regarded as entertainment, they won't stand up, as their own countrymen say. But I'm very glad to say I have several records that are absolutely charming in every way.

THE MONTH'S CHOICE

Frank Chacksfield Orch.	Decca LK4257
Les Baxter Orch.	Cap. EAP3-868
Jack Payne Orch.	H.M.V. CLP1160
Malcolm Lockyer Orch.	Mercury MLP6538
Morris and Mitch	Decca DFE6486
Marjorie Daw	Col. SEG7792
Debbie Reynolds	Coral Q72324
Sue Raney	Cap. T964
George London	Decca LK4230

Heading the list is the gentle, unaffected charm of **Marjorie Daw** in *Personally*, describing the way she sings on Col. SEG7792. English as they unfortunately don't often come, this young lady has all the personality any recording star could want. From her picture on the sleeve, she is neither chocolate-box nor cheesecake, as they say; but by Crosby! she's got what it ought to take. (Oh yes; Brunswick have condensed the five **Bing Crosby** albums issued in 1955 into a section covering 1927 to 1934, with comments by Bing, on LAT8251. I am indebted to Mr. John Carroll, of Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A., by the way, for the information that Bing's last Philips record (PB817) of the golfing songs was made from a direct-line transcription of a TV show that gave the finals of a golf championship, at which Bing Crosby participated.)

Reverting to the girls again, there is a fine LP of young **Sue Raney** (Cap. T964), whose husky voice matches her wistful cover-expression, and sounds great in *When Your Lover Has Gone* and similar numbers. **Mindy Carson**, more adult and somewhat brasher, has a good set on Philips BBL7249, all *Baby* numbers, and both **Valerie Shane** (Philips PB833*) and **Eileen Rogers** (Fontana H136*) plead *Careful, Careful*. At least, Miss Shane is more coaxing than Miss Rogers, who almost sounds irritable. The English girl on Philips has a nice enough backing, too: *When The Boys Talk About The Girls*, while the American on Fontana indulges in a weepie, *I'm Alone Because I Love You*, which sounds as if it must be all of seventy years old. (As it is, it's thirty.)

Vera Lynn, who can be relied on to pick good ballads, does so on Decca F11038* in *Every Hour, Every Day Of My Life* and *The Wind Cannot Read* (from the film of that name), and the unusual themes and tunes of *Bad Pianna Rag* and *Send A Letter To Jeannette—Yet!* by **Audrey Jeans** (Decca F11035*) I found very interesting. I don't quite know why **Connie Francis** has made such a hit with *Who's Sorry Now?* which has been a good tune for longer than I can remember (1923 was the exact date); it reappears on M.G.M. EP658 and, with the other three nonentities, it's bound to sell the disc. Two much more appealing M.G.M. EPs are both by the **Ray Charles Singers**—EP653, all summery songs, including the title-song *Summertime*, and EP657, sung with the **George Shearing Quintet**. Though slicker and less homely, these two are produced with real artistry. All are Shearing compositions.

A sweet new number is *A Hillside In Scotland*, and it is given the wistful *Tammy* treatment by **Debbie Reynolds** on Coral Q72324*, backed by a tonic in the form of *This Happy Feeling* (from the film). **Lita Roza** on Nixa N15149* also sings of the hillside in Scotland, but less convincingly than Debbie Reynolds; her other number, *Sorry, Sorry, Sorry*, gives her a chance to show her American training, accent and all, and to let her hair down for some unabashed corn. Four American girls, all married, known as the **Chordettes**, offer *Riding High*, a conventional selection of standards sung with maturity and mellowness in their voices (London HAA2098) in a way that makes a pleasant change from the bawling and yelling of certain others.

And now the men. **Pat Boone** (London HLD8640*) revives another old one, *Chérie, I Love You*, backing it with *Sugar Moon*, good enough, but he has done better; **Nat "King" Cole** (Cap. CL14882*) sings two rather reproachful numbers, *Looking Back* and *Just For The Fun Of It*, in his best style; the **Four Preps** (Cap. EAP1-1015) have four numbers that do not measure up to *Big Man* last month, and nor does the **Stargazers'** version of this on Decca F11034*; and **Vic Damone** intones *Sugar* and three other ballads reflectively, even too slowly, on Mercury MEP9534.

Frank Sinatra has three new records this month. At least, they are not all new. Fontana TFE17043 revives the songs he sang in 1945 in "Anchors Aweigh", originally issued on Columbia; but the contents of Cap. LCT6155 and EAP1-1013 are, I'm sure, mostly if not all, fresh additions to the catalogues. He hasn't changed much between the Fontana and the Capitols. *The Lady Is A Tramp* is one of his best up-tempo records for some time. **George London** possesses a fine baritone voice, which he uses to revive American musical comedy hits of the last thirty or forty years for our great pleasure on Decca LK4230, and **Norman Wisdom** and his supporting cast record their numbers from the successful current musical at the Palace in London, "Where's Charley?", on Col. 33SX1085. On Disneyland DPL39002 and 39003 we can relive the delights of the original soundtracks of "Pinocchio" and "Snow White" respectively, which have been transferred with remarkable clarity, considering they are about twenty years old. This is one for all children.

Lastly, a disc I should have mentioned among what I called the exotica, for that is what it is called. It is a 10-inch LP of fiery Latin music by **Martin Denny** and his group, consisting of the usual rhythm section, vibraphone and various glasses and gongs, with jungle effects that are quite startlingly real (London HBU1079).

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CONTINENTAL RECORDS

By LILIAN DUFF

It's wonderful, as a playwright has noted, how second-rate music can stir most hearts. Anyway, I know that five new collections make me more than ordinarily impatient to renew acquaintance with Bavaria and Italy. In "Beloved Neapolitan Songs" (Durium DLU96032) even such well-worn things as *Funiculi, Funicula, Santa Lucia* and *Core 'ngrato* are not without their charm, and some of the other songs are fresher. *Comme facette mammete*, a lover's tribute to his sweetheart, is a great favourite of mine, and *Passione* and *'Na Sera 'e Maggio*—the one expressing devotion, the other complaining that even at romantic moments his sweetheart obviously has her mind on somebody else—are less familiar over here. The singer, attractive as always, is **Aurelio Fierro**.

"Napoli in Song" (Durium TLU97010) is also a mixture of old and new, which I found very pleasant. *Chella 'lla* (known also as *Ha! Ha! Ha!* and *Oh! la! la!*) and *Lazzarella* are already favourites. Some of the other things sung by **Marino Marini**, **Olga Pizzi** and **Aurelio Fierro** are hardly known to the British public. The theme of them all is love, but at least the dressing is varied.

In *Si comm' 'a n'ombra* a man returns to the old house where he spent his happy youth and finds memories of his beloved all around him. *Napule, sole mio* rhapsodically proclaims that there are flowers on every balcony, a smile is on every girl's lips and love is in the air. In *Storta va... deritta vene* (as, of course, in *Chella 'lla*) a cynical young man boasts, none too convincingly, like more than one of our poets, that he is rid of a faithless girl and glad of it. *Malinconico Autunno* and *Appriesso a te* are frank confessions of misery caused by a girl's fickleness; in *Che c'e conce*, showing more spirit, the

sufferer tells his sweetheart bluntly that she is not the only beauty in the world and that anyway she overplays the air of mystery. Incidentally, how pleasant to come on a comic song with a line like "You are so full of mystery you look like Hamlet!" On the Continent, even among the masses, the literary tradition lingers on. Our own fans could tell you exactly what Tommy Steele likes. But Hamlet? They wouldn't dig it.

The third collection of 16 songs and instrumental pieces "Italian Panorama" (Durium TLU97012) offers very much the same type of material as last month's "Holiday in Italy Vol. 3". Many of the tunes have been available in earlier collections. If you don't happen to own them, it's very good value. The artists include the inevitable **Aurelio Fierro**, **Marino Marini**, **Roberto Murolo**, **Rino Salviati** and **Olga Pizzi**.

Yodelling, to some people, is like a red rag to a bull. In moderation I quite enjoy its unaffected gusto, which is not to say that I recommend constantly playing the LP collection, by **Reserl Bauer**, right through at a sitting. "So jodelt's in den Bergen" (Parlophone PMD1059), with "Yodel-ay-ee-o-o-o" as a sub-title to warn you what you're getting, offers 29 pieces, some of which are as familiar as *Erzherzog Johann* and others unknown to me. Titles like *Zitherimprovisation*, *Luzerner Jodler*, *Zillertal, du bist mei Freud* and *In Werdenfels bin i geborn* speak for themselves. "Holidays in Bavaria" (Parlophone PMD1060) offers a similar assortment, simple, gay and charming, together with four things inspired by the annual Munich festival. The zither players in the two collections are **Rudi Knabl** and **Alfons Bauer**, both accomplished.

forceful manner than usual; if that is so, the experiment did not succeed. The scores (by Jimmy Heath, Phil Urso, Christian Chevalier and Pierre Michelot) are adequate but rather restrained and Baker plays in his customary retiring style. Art Pepper has a solo on *Tenderly* and amongst the other musicians to be heard are Phil Urso (on alto and tenor), trombonists Bob Burgess and Frank Rosolino, pianist Bobby Timmons, baritone saxist Bill Hood and alto man Frank Waters. Although this was potentially a good album, the unadventurous arrangements failed to extract the true quality of these musicians. A.M.

Chris Barber's Jazz Band

"Barber's Best"

Bobby Shafto: *The Martinique*; *Chimes Blues*; *Merrydown Rag*; *Skokkian*; *St. Louis Blues* (V Otilie Patterson)/*It's Tight Like That* (V Chris Barber); *Ice Cream* (V Pat Halcox); *Oh Didn't He Ramble* (V Monty Sunshine); *Storyville Blues*; *The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise*; *Reckless Blues* (V Otilie Patterson). (Decca 12 in. LP LK4246—35s. 10d.)

When The Saints Go Marching In (Pts. I & II). (V Otilie Patterson).

(Nixa 7 in. 45 7N2023—6s. 7½d.)

All the titles on the Decca LP have been issued before, some of them several times. Not that this isn't a handy form in which to keep a Barber collection, but need we have *Tight Like That* again? *Chimes Blues* is delightful; it's one of the best of Barber's recordings, in fact, as are its neighbours, *The Martinique* and *Merrydown Rag*. Most of the other tracks were made at Royal Festival Hall concerts and occasionally suffer from audience participation.

The Nixa disc splits a lengthy *Saints*, made more interesting than usual because of the new (?) lyrics, written by Chris Barber himself (so it says on the label). Each side, however, is playable independently, a very neat arrangement. If I must listen to another version of the *Saints*, then let it be this one. O.K.

Acker Bilk's Paramount Jazz Band

"Mr. Acker Bilk Requests..."

Treveling Blues; *Delia Gone* (V); *Gladious Rag*; *Willie The Weeper/Dardanelle*; *Franklyn Street Blues*; *Easter Parade*; *Marching Through Georgia*.

(Nixa 10 in. LP NJT513—27s. 10d.)

This band, neat and easy on the ear, swings crisply through a selection of old, not-quite-so-old, and positively ancient themes, all of them apt vehicles for the cheerful style of music which this unit plays. The effect may be rather Barber-ish, but it's none the worse for that. O.K.

Sharkey Bonano's Kings of Dixieland

Second Line: *Look What You Missed* (V Bonano); *Panama*.

Paul Barbarin's New Orleans Band

Too Late; *We'll Meet Again* (V Barbarin); *Dooky's Doing His Dance*.

Bill Matthews' New Orleans Dixieland Band

Bug!; *Call Rag*; *We Shall Walk Through The Streets Of The City* (V Ernie Cagnoliati); *Maryland*.

Gene Girard and his New Orleans Five

Doctor Jazz (V Girard); *Liebestraum*; *Sax*. (Good Time Jazz 12 in. LP LAG12083—38s. 3d.)

Four bands recorded in New Orleans in 1956 (full details on the sleeve) are presented here in some obviously hackneyed and some quite original tunes.

Bonano's band is disciplined, and both this and Barbarin's show that pop-style tunes are not beneath their notice. *Look What You Missed* is reminiscent melodically of *Chinatown*, but it's no worse for that. I liked both these bands, for they recalled the great days of the pioneers without sounding consciously like any of them.

Bill Matthews' band features long drum soli that bore, a very sour *Maryland*, and a vocalist on *Streets Of The City* who sounds as if he had

JAZZ AND SWING

Reviewed by

CHARLES FOX, ALUN MORGAN AND OLIVER KING

Lorez Alexandria

"Lorez Sings Pres"

Fine And Dandy; *fooling Myself*; *D. B. Blues*; *You're Driving Me Crazy*; *Easy Living/Polka Dots And Moonbeams*; *This Year's Kisses*; *There Will Never Be Another You*; *No Eyes Blues*; *Jumpin' With Symphony Sid*.

(Parlophone 10 in. LP PMD1062—27s. 10d.)

Using the voice to re-create a jazz instrumentalist's solos is a trickier business than Lorez Alexandria thinks. King Pleasure and Annie Ross have brought it off with great brio; in fact, a bevy of Miss Ross's fans (including your reviewer) can hardly wait for H.M.V. to issue her latest ABC Paramount disc, "Sing A Song Of Basie". But Lorez, paying what is no doubt a sincere tribute to Lester Young, becomes something of a bore.

The tunes without words—*D. B. Blues* and *Jumpin' With Symphony Sid*, for instance—are scattered, and pleasant though Lorez may sound under happier circumstances, she is no Ella or Sarah. Her habit of lagging behind the beat,

too, although true to Lester, soon starts to irritate.

The excellent rhythm section comprises King Fleming on piano, drummer Vernal Fournier and two bassists, L. D. Young and Earl May, who split the work between them. Charles Stepney (vibes) and Paul Sereno (trumpet) can also be heard, but the highspot of the session is Cy Touff's sombre chorus on bass trumpet in *No Eyes Blues*. C.F.

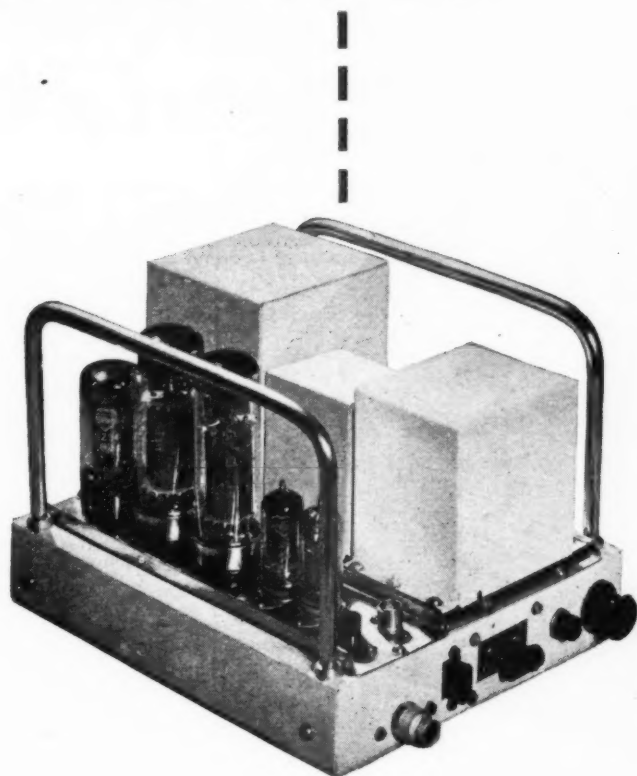
Chet Baker Big Band

A Foggy Day; *Mythe*; *Worrying The Life Out Of Me*; *Chet*; *Not Too Slow/Philly Blues*; *Darn That Dream*; *Dinah*; *V-Line*; *Tenderly*.

(Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12100—38s. 3d.)

How many musicians constitute a big band? Seven of the tracks on this record are by a nonet, while *Tenderly*, *Darn That Dream* and *A Foggy Day* feature an eleven-man line-up. According to the sleeve-notes the idea behind the sessions was to make Chet Baker play his trumpet in a more

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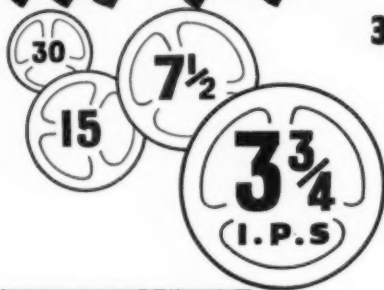
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(G.R.a)

been listening to Lonnie Donegan. *Bugle Call Rag* is much too fast.

The late Gene Girard's band is rather ragged in *Doctor Jazz*—Jelly Roll Morton's impeccable version has probably ruined all others for me—though this unit shows that Liszt's third and most famous *Liebestraum* fits jazz very well (as, indeed, Morton showed with his *Fish Tail Blues* in 1924 and *Sidewalk Blues* in 1926).

It is well to have this disc, as a very good cross-section of what is going on in New Orleans today in the musical world. O.K.

Bob Brookmeyer

"Traditionalism Revisited"

Louisiana: *Santa Claus Blues: Truckin'*: *Some Sweet Day/Sweet Like This: Jada: Don't Be That Way: Honeysuckle Rose*. (Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12108—38s. 3d.)

When Bob Brookmeyer visited Britain with the Gerry Mulligan Quartet last year he impressed most people who met him with the breadth and intelligence of his opinions about jazz; here was a modern musician who admired singers like Sleepy John Estes, soloists like Sidney Bechet, just as much as he did his own contemporaries. That perceptive broad-mindedness has now been put to creative use. In "Traditionalism Revisited" Brookmeyer performs a set of tunes "associated with older players and previous decades". The result is an absorbing and exciting record, one of the very finest ever to come from America's West Coast.

It often gets forgotten that Brookmeyer started his jazz career as a pianist. ("I was pianist with Pee Wee Russell's band," he recalls on the sleeve, "Now he is a musician—a sort of prehistoric Lester Young"). What is more, Brookmeyer happens to be a very good pianist, as he proves in a seven-minute version of *Truckin'*, perhaps the best track on the LP, his lithe, robust playing admirably backed up by guitarist Jim Hall, bassist Ralph Pena and drummer Dave Bailey.

On most of the other tracks bassist Joe Benjamin replaced Pena, while Jimmy Giuffrè is heard alternating between clarinet and tenor and baritone saxes. *Louisiana, Don't Be That Way* and *Jada* swing loosely and straightforwardly, with good solo playing all round. Much more interesting, however, are *Santa Claus Blues*, *Some Sweet Day* and *Sweet Like This*, where the performances are based upon classic recordings of the tunes. The first of these, originally made by the Red Onion Jazz Babies in 1924, is treated simply and gently, Giuffrè sounding like Pee Wee Russell as he blows a series of breathy but expressive choruses on clarinet. Brookmeyer genuflects before Louis Armstrong in his introduction to *Some Sweet Day*, recorded by the great trumpet-player back in 1933. The opening of *Sweet Like This* (recorded by King Oliver in 1930) even has Brookmeyer playing Oliver's muted cornet solo note for note and Giuffrè (on clarinet) doing the same with Dave Nelson's solo. After that both men work along their own lines, yet without any sense of incongruity or anti-climax.

I cannot recommend this record too highly. Both Brookmeyer and Giuffrè perform vigorously and inventively, while Jim Hall proves once more that he is the finest white guitarist around today. (I'd have bet on Hall's being the finest of all if I hadn't heard Wes Montgomery a few weeks ago; recordings featuring Wes will be out in the autumn, so everybody can argue about it then.) The real triumph of this LP, though, lies in the way in which these modern musicians have reinterpreted older tunes and solo patterns, respecting the spirit of the originals while not remaining content to fashion mere period facsimiles. C.F.

Dave Brubeck Quartet

"Dave Digs Disney"

Alice In Wonderland: Give A Little Whistle: Heigh-Ho/When You Wish Upon A Star: Some Day My Prince Will Come: One Song. (Fontana 12 in. LP TFL5017—37s. 6jd.)

The six tunes making up this LP, studio-recorded last summer by Brubeck's group (Dave, Paul Desmond, Norman Bates and Joe Morello), were all featured originally in the Walt Disney cartoons "Pinocchio", "Alice In Wonderland" and "Snow White". This is the best quartet Brubeck has yet led on record and the material is sufficiently varied to provide a good, contrasting programme. The most intriguing track is *Some Day My Prince Will Come*, for here Dave makes intelligent use of differing time signatures. The rhythm section plays in 3/4 throughout (although at times they seem to raise it to 6/8) while Desmond and Brubeck superimpose their improvised lines in common time. On occasions the effect on the listener is almost schizophrenic, but the musicians perform their parts without a falter. If it is possible to recommend an LP on the strength of just one track, then I urge readers to hear *Some Day My Prince Will Come* in its entirety. A.M.

Clyde Valley Stompers

Teddy Bears' Picnic: The Eyes of Texas: I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate (V): Struttin' With Some Barbecue/Millennium Joya (V): Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home? (V): The Old Rustic Bridge By The Mill: Uist Tramping Song: Keep Right On To The End Of The Road. (Beltona 10 in. LP ABL524—24s.)

Well, at least this Scottish traditional band seeks to impress itself upon the public by an unusual repertoire, if nothing else. Oddly enough, *Old Rustic Bridge* turns out to be one of the most successful tracks of all and swings along very nicely. I hardly recognised the *Uist Tramping Song*, and I shudder to think what Sir Hugh Robertson would say about it; or Sir Harry Lauder of *Keep Right On*, for that matter. All the same, both items make quite good, light-hearted, Barber-shop jazz.

Neither of the clarinetists heard on this LP (it is the product of two separate sessions) have enough power for either ensemble or solo work, but both the trumpet players who took part shape up very handsomely. Leader Ian Menzies, on trombones, sounds as if he would like to let himself go a bit more, but for some reason fails to do so. As a result he lacks fire, yet must be given credit for some neat, well-poised solos. Pianist John Doherty sounds good, and the whole band makes a clean and very acceptable impact. Mary MacGowan may not be a Bessie Smith, but she is infinitely preferable to most of today's so-called "blues" singers. O.K.

Buddy Collette and His Trio

"Calm, Cool and Collette"
Undecided: Night In Tunisia/Johnny Walks. (H.M.V. 7 in. EP 7EG8356—11s. 1jd.)

Johnny Walks, occupying one entire side of this EP, should be sufficient inducement for collectors to buy this record. It contains one of Collette's best alto solos to date, and he infuses a greater degree of emotional warmth into his playing than ever before. The "Johnny" specified in the title, incidentally, is bassist John Goodman, who takes a fine walking solo. Buddy is heard again on alto in *Undecided*; he plays the melody incorrectly at bars four, twelve and twenty-eight of the first chorus and is generally less impressive than on the long blues track. *Tunisia*, a pretty, rather superficial performance, has Collette playing flute. The remaining members of the group are pianist Dick Shreve and drummer Bill Dolney. A.M.

Teddy Charles-Hall Overton-Oscar Pettiford

"Three For Duke"

Main Stem: Do Nothin' 'Til You Hear From Me: Sophisticated Lady/Don't Get Around Much Any More: Sherman Shuffle: The Mooche. (London 12 in. LP LTZ-J15119—37s. 6jd.)

Jazz is full of surprises. Usually records by vibraphonist Teddy Charles are pretentious in the extreme, but *Three For Duke* is a praiseworthy album of Ellington interpretations. Charles discards his "Nu-Di" principles and gets down to straightforward jazz, aided by the sympathetic piano playing of Overton and the superb bass playing of Pettiford. Oscar, in my opinion the best jazz bass player today, more than compensates for the lack of a drummer, and his own term of service with the Ellington orchestra clearly helped in the planning of the session. The rapport existing between the three men is remarkable, and on *Main Stem* their playing is strongly reminiscent of the now-defunct Vic Feldman-Lennie Bush-Tony Crombie trio. A relaxed version of Ellington's lush *Sophisticated Lady* is the highspot of this admirable release. A.M.

Ken Colyer's Omega Brass Band

"Marching To New Orleans"

Over In Gloryland: Bugle Boy March: Jambalaya: Just A Closer Walk With Thee/Isle Of Capri: Panama Rag: Tiger Rag: Gettysburg March. (Decca 10 in. LP LF1301—24s.)

Ah! I wondered how long it would be before somebody—and who better than Ken Colyer, our foremost devotee of pure New Orleans music—would blossom forth with a British impression of the parade and marching bands of the Crescent City. It turns out to be not at all a bad effort, even if *Isle of Capri* hardly makes the most suitable vehicle for this kind of jazz. This particular track plods and bumps along, although all the others seem to march ahead quite happily, saxophone and all. (Hooray! At last someone has realized that you can play traditional jazz on the saxophone!) Indeed, there is some neat interplay between the alto and clarinet on most tracks.

Poor old *Tiger Rag* sounds very tame when it's treated in this fashion. I'd have preferred a little more imagination in the selection of the other numbers, too, but there you are. Any record with another *Closer Walk* on it is bound to sell. O.K.

Buddy DeFranco Quartet

"The Melodic Mr. DeFranco"

Left Field: Jack The Field Stalker/When Your Lover Has Gone. (Columbia 7 in. EP SEB10093—11s. 10d.)

Clarinetist Buddy DeFranco moves energetically through these three performances with superb technique and suave superficiality. The rhythm section (Kenny Drew, Milt Hinton and Art Blakey) provided me with the most enjoyment, for I found Buddy's playing too predictable to hold my interest for long. Kenny Drew wrote the up-tempo *Left Field* and Oscar Pettiford the interesting *Jack The Field Stalker*. A.M.

Eddie Davis Trio

"Lockjaw"

Moonlight In Vermont: Beano/Johnny Come Lately: I'll Remember April. (Parlophone 7 in. EP GEP8678—11s. 1jd.)

When Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis toured Britain with the Count Basie orchestra last autumn he proved himself a master of brinkmanship, often pausing just on the edge of honking but never stepping beyond it. This aspect of his playing can be heard in *Beano*, a fairly uninhibited performance. But the superficial excitement of much of Davis's playing should not be allowed to obscure the quality of his improvising. Using a warm, rich tone and rather romantic phrasing,

taking Coleman Hawkins as an exemplar but not forgetting Lester Young, Eddie Davis creates genuinely imaginative solos. Even when rhapsodizing he never loses his grip; *Moonlight In Vermont* is a good example of this, a lazy-sounding, reflective interpretation that still remains muscular. On all these tracks "Lockjaw" is accompanied by Doc Bagby on organ and Charlie Rice on drums; normally I hate the organ in jazz but Bagby's reticence and good taste almost win me over. C.F.

Bill Doggett

"Bill Doggett Plays Duke Ellington"
Perdido: C Jam Blues/Caravan: Satin Doll.
 (Parlophone 7 in. EP GEP8674—11s. 14d.)

The Hammond organ's place in jazz is questionable; by nature it is not an instrument suited to clipped or precise phrasing. Bill Doggett uses the organ in a way which is at once stimulating and intelligent, building up "orchestral" accompanying figures and allowing other musicians to perform against this backdrop. I would recommend this EP to anyone still sceptical of the instrument's worth. The choice of four Ellington tunes, of course, goes a long way towards making a success of the record. Clifford Scott blows gutty-toned tenor and quite adequate flute solos, while the guitar work of Billy Butler is especially noteworthy. The personnel is not listed on the sleeve; apart from the aforementioned musicians, Edwyn Conley is on bass and Shep Shepherd on drums. The session took place in Cincinnati on December 18th, 1956. A.M.

Art Ellefson

"Art Of Ellefson"
Opus Mentis: Let Yourself Go/Mile-A-Minim: Mad About The Boy.
 (Nixa 7 in. EP NJE1052—12s. 104d.)

Art Ellefson, a Canadian musician now resident in Britain, plays bass-clarinets, clarinet, and the alto, tenor and baritone sax on this record. On each tune (*Opus Mentis* and *Mile-A-Minim* are his own originals, by the way) he has taped all the separate parts necessary to make up a reed section, although just why he has done this instead of using three or four other saxophonists is beyond my comprehension. In fact I find it difficult to view this record as anything but a pure gimmick, dreamed up by a sales representative ("Look, he plays all the saxophones himself!"). The section blend is never really excellent and the bass clarinet on *Opus Mentis* sounds badly out of tune. The tenor sax appears to be Art's best instrument, with the alto a close second. *Let Yourself Go*, on which Ellefson plays alto, two tenors and a baritone, is the most successful track. The rhythm section comprises pianist Johnny Clark, bassist Bill Stark and drummer Andy White. A.M.

Leonard Feather's West Coast Jazzmen

"Swingin' On The Vibories"
Stompin' At The Savoy/Ornithology
 (H.M.V. 7 in. EP 7EG8357—11s. 14d.)

The vibories is a keyboard attachment which enables the vibraphone to be played like a piano. Leonard Feather has already introduced us to this gruesome contrivance on an M.G.M. EP and at the time I secretly hoped we would hear it no more. On this record, however, Feather, Gerald Wiggins and Sonny Clark take turns at the electronic machine. Single melodic lines are not too bad, but clusters of notes and block-chords sound hideous; surely the vibraphone was never intended to be played in this way. Bob Enevoldsen takes a good trombone solo on *Stompin' at the Savoy* and two excellent musicians, Red Mitchell and Leroy Vinnegar, divide the bass work between them. Nevertheless, this is a very poor record. A.M.

Tal Farlow

"Tal"
Yesterdays/Broadway.
 (Columbia 7 in. EP SEB10097—11s. 104d.)

Guitarist Tal Farlow, interviewed by *Metronome* magazine recently, remarked that he felt he sometimes overdid the use of even quavers in his improvisations. After hearing his up-tempo version of Jerome Kern's ballad, *Yesterday*, I am inclined to agree with his self-criticism. Farlow seems intent on taking the most difficult way out rather than constructing flowing and less complicated lines. There is a brittle, percussive quality to the music produced by Farlow, pianist Eddie Costa and bass player Vinnie Burke which I find restless and unnecessarily disturbing. The technical brilliance of all three is never in doubt, but their work lacks warmth and shading. A.M.

Stan Getz

Prelude To A Kiss: I'm Getting Sentimental Over You/Flamingo: Don't Get Scared.
 (Esquire 7 in. EP EP194—13s. 74d.)

The most consistently musical of all the volatile personalities who toured Britain recently with "Jazz At The Philharmonic", Stan Getz has an elegant, feathery style; his solos always on the move, he disdains the use of clichés. The four tracks on this EP are reissues of recordings that Getz made in 1951, during an earlier trip to Europe, and the group of Swedish musicians accompanying him include pianist Bengt Hallberg and baritone-saxist Lars Gullin. Hallberg, as a matter of fact, almost outplays Getz on some tracks, his solos beautifully delicate and swinging. Getz meanders too much at slower tempo, but *I'm Getting Sentimental Over You* and *Don't Get Scared* are good examples of his light, airy style. C.F.

Dizzy Gillespie

"Dizzy Atmosphere"
Dishwater: Someone I Know: DDT/Whisper Not: About Time: Day By Day: Rite Of Swing: Over The Rainbow.
 (London 12 in. LP LTZ-U15121—37s. 64d.)

A septet from the now-defunct Dizzy Gillespie band recorded these titles in Hollywood in February, 1957. Benny Golson was responsible for the moving *Whisper Not* and also arranged *Day By Day*, featuring trombonist Al Gray. The rest of the numbers were scored by another Gillespie arranger, Roger Spotts. This music is virile and extrovert but seldom degenerates into an endless string of solos. Trumpeter Lee Morgan sounds much improved and plays excellently on *Whisper Not* and *Dishwater*. The latter track, in fact, is the best of the set, commencing with a thrilling Wynton Kelly piano solo before the entry of the ensemble. Baritone saxist Billy Root and tenor saxist Billy Mitchell contribute earthy, forceful solos, while the bass and drums are played by Paul West and Charlie Persip respectively. The passing of Dizzy's last big band was a severe blow to modern jazz, for apart from its value as a full-blooded unit it also provided several talented young musicians with the kind of experience and environment they needed. A.M.

Dizzy Gillespie

"Birkin's Works"
Left-Hand Corner: Over The Rainbow (V)/Seems Like You Just Don't Care (V): Autumn Leaves.
 (Columbia 7 in. EP SEB10096—11s. 104d.)

Three of these titles, all recorded during last summer, are played by the band which Dizzy Gillespie was forced to disband earlier this year. Ernie Wilkins' *Left-Hand Corner* comes in for rousing treatment, with Dizzy soaring excitingly and solo spots from Billy Mitchell's tenor sax and the trombone of Melba Liston, the only girl brass-player working in a band of this class. In

Autumn Leaves, also scored by Ernie Wilkins, Dizzy's trumpet floats airily and there is a short alto sax solo by the late Ernie Henry. Charlie Persip drums superbly throughout both tracks. Check by jowl with these performances it is startling to find *Over The Rainbow*, devoted to the singing of Austin Cromer, a vocalist with a phenomenal range and a penchant for the melodramatic. His style exaggerates Billy Eckstine's, often to a point of ludicrousness.

The remaining item, *Seems Like You Just Don't Care*, dates from 1955, being recorded just before Gillespie formed his big band. The nine-piece studio group includes Harry Edison, Willie Smith and Carl Perkins, although the only solos come from Dizzy himself and tenor-saxist Curtis Amy. Herb Lance, who sings on this track, is another Eckstine disciple, but at least displays commendable beat and swing. C.F.

Benny Goodman Sextet

Just One Of Those Things: China Boy: Shine: Rachel's Dream/Tiger Rag: Ain't Misbehavin': She's Funny That Way (V): I Got Rhythm.
 (Fontana 10 in. LP TFR6006—29s. 24d.)

This is a reissue of an LP which Columbia originally released (reviewed in *The GRAMOPHONE*, December 1954) but which was deleted when the American Columbia catalogue passed over to Philips. All the tracks were recorded in 1945. On *Just One Of Those Things*, *Rachel's Dream* and *She's Funny That Way* Goodman is supported by Teddy Wilson, Mike Bryan, Slam Stewart, Morey Feld and Red Norvo; the remaining tracks have Mel Powell replacing Wilson.

With the exception of *She's Funny That Way*, marred by Jane Harvey's dull singing, these are all urbane, amiable performances, with Goodman's clarinet as agile and warm-toned as ever. Norvo strokes the vibraphone gently, taking good solos on *Ain't Misbehavin'* and *Rachel's Dream* (perhaps the best track), while Mike Bryan, as well as playing excellent rhythm guitar, is heard solo in *Shine*. Mel Powell manages to sound more like Teddy Wilson than Wilson himself, if that is possible. In fact only Slam Stewart's grotesqueries seem to have worn at all badly. C.F.

Chico Hamilton Trio

Blues On The Rocks: Street Of Drums: We'll Be Together Again: Skinned Strings: Nutty! Porch Light: Broadway: Autumn Landscape: Uganda: Lollypop.
 (Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12077—38s. 8d.)

"No one knows better than he," says the sleeve-note, discussing Chico Hamilton, "how boring those interminable, Fourth-of-July drum solos can be, and he doesn't indulge in them." Well, well; maybe the session took place on April the First (no date is given, by the way), but however tasteful this drumming may be, it still sounds as tedious as the vulgar kind. The real trouble with this Trio, though, is that there just isn't enough instrumental contrast to keep a hard-worked reviewer awake throughout two twelve-inch sides.

Jim Hall is a strong, virile guitarist (I praised him at length only a couple of months ago) and he takes admirable solos on *Blues On The Rocks*, *Porch Light* and *Autumn Landscape* (the last-named, featuring Hall, is the best track on the LP); Howard Roberts, who plays on the remainder, is another resourceful and inventive soloist. But two guitarists don't make a masterpiece or even a particularly interesting record, and in between their solos lie inches of "tasteful interplay" between Chico's drums and George Duvivier's bass. *Skinned Strings* could even be said to bring *Big Noise From Winnetka* within the reach of every modern jazz fan.

Blues On The Rocks, incidentally, has been issued here already, as part of a Pacific Jazz anthology, "The Blues" (Vogue LAE12063). C.F.

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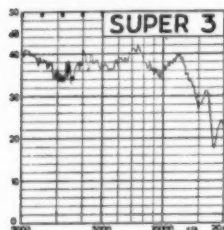
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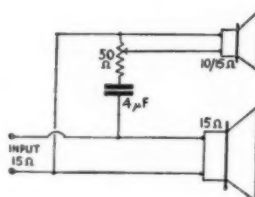
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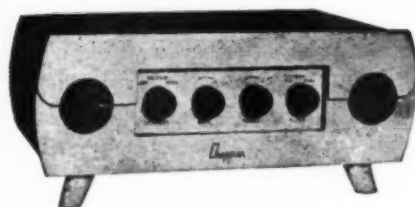
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Coleman Hawkins

I Mean You: You Go To My Head/ Cocktails For Two: Bean And The Boys.

(Esquire 7 in. EP EP192—13s. 74d.)

All four tracks date from 1948 and were originally issued here on 78s. *You Go To My Head* and *Cocktails For Two* present really superb playing by Hawkins, his tone ripe and warm, his phrasing lavish, his imagination obviously working at full stretch. He is ably supported by pianist Hank Jones, bassist Curley Russell, drummer Max Roach and Milt Jackson on vibes. In contrast to these slow, reflective performances, *Bean And The Boys* (actually *Lover Come Back To Me*) and *I Mean You* are faster and more extrovert. Hawkins is always credited with being the first of the older jazz soloists to encourage the young modernists, and for these two tracks he used trumpeter Fats Navarro, trombonist J. J. Johnson and alto-saxist Porter Kilbert in addition to the men already mentioned. Although the solos seem rather too short, everybody gets a chance, with exciting and satisfying results. C.F.

Coleman Hawkins

"The Hawk Talks"

Lucky Duck: Spellbound: I Can't Get Started: Lonely Wine: Ruby: Trust In Me/If I Could Be With You: Song from 'Moulin Rouge': Midnight Sun: Amber: Lost In A Fog: Carioica.

(Brunswick 12 in. LP LAT8242—37s. 64d.)

These twelve tracks, comprising chiefly standard tunes and film themes, were recorded at four sessions during 1952 and 1953; some have appeared here previously as standard-speed releases. Apart from *I Can't Get Started* and *If I Could Be With You*, on which Hawkins plays brilliantly, the tracks are generally too commercial for the jazz fan. While acknowledging the richness of Hawkins' tone and his ability to control a wide vibrato at all tempos, I find much of this music too unashamedly sentimental for comfort. True, Neal Hefti's *Lucky Duck* comes to life, but at up-tempo these days Hawk is seldom very constructive.

Lonely Wine and *Trust In Me* feature a steel guitar played by Sam Makia and no amount of Hawkins' artistry can dispel the illusion that this is sound-track music from a Hollywood horse-opera. To add insult to injury, the trumpet and baritone sax heard briefly and distantly behind Makia are played by Joe Wilder and Danny Bank respectively. What a waste of talent! A.M.

Earl Hines

"Paris One Night Stand"

Perdido: Save It, Pretty Mama: Muskrat Ramble: Moonlight In Vermont: Nice Work If You Can Get It: Am I Wasting My Time: You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me: Hallelujah!: If I Could Be With You: Walkin' My Baby Back Home: Makin' Whoopee: I Got It Bad.

(Philips 12 in. LP BBL7222—37s. 64d.)

Arguing about who is the greatest jazz performer on a particular instrument has always struck me as being pretty fruitless. Yet whenever I hear Earl Hines play, the conviction that here is the finest jazz pianist of them all surges over me, and once again I have to trot out all those well-thumbed superlatives. Surely no jazz pianist injects more variety into his solos (the range goes all the way from cut-and-thrust buoyancy to a gentle, twilight sobriety) and nobody swings more or displays quite the same mixture of conciseness and audacity. Above all, here is a jazz musician with a broad, powerful imagination.

These qualities, compounding into a wonderful sense of authority, emerge once again on this LP, recorded after Earl Hines' tour of Britain with Jack Teagarden in November of

last year. The tide is explained by the fact that Philips' original intention of recording Hines at their London studios was frustrated by the Musicians' Union; instead, the pianist had to be flown to Paris and made the session there.

Hines needs no accompaniment, even from the finest musicians; least of all does he need men like bassist Guy Pederson and drummer Gus Wallez backing him up. Wherever he goes on this LP, they tag along too, dragging him back rather than stimulating him. Despite this drawback, these are still remarkable performances; not Hines at his greatest, but still good enough to go into anybody's collection.

There is a springing, virtuoso treatment of *Nice Work If You Can Get It* and beautifully relaxed, yes, but never slack) versions of *You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me* and *Am I Wasting My Time*, as well as a quietly confident *Moonlight In Vermont*, one of Earl's favourite ballads. It is also intriguing to hear a solo version of *Save It Pretty Mama*, a tune Hines seems not to have recorded since he did it with Louis in 1928 and Sidney Bechet in 1940. C.F.

Hank Jones Quartet

Moonlight Becomes You: Relaxin' At Camarillo/Minor Contention: Sunday In Savannah: Spontaneous Combustion.

(London 12 in. LP LTZ-C15118—37s. 64d.)

Consistency is not always a virtue in jazz. A seemingly endless series of immaculate performances has not earned pianist Hank Jones all of the praise he so richly deserves. With all due respect to flautist Bobby Jaspar, it is Hank's sensitive but authoritatively played solos which attract the ear on this excellent record. His touch is very expressive and enables him to increase the tension of a performance merely by adding subtle nuances of shading.

Belgium's Bobby Jaspar, now resident in New York, seems to have mastered the flute quite as fully as have his contemporaries on that instrument. The remarkable bass playing heard throughout is the work of the steadily improving Paul Chambers, and the drumming is by Kenny Clarke. The recording date, not given on either label or sleeve, is August 21st, 1956. A.M.

Max Kaminsky and his Dixieland Band

"Go Go Go!"

Royal Garden Blues: Squeeze Me/Go Go Go! I've Got The World On A String.

(M.G.M. 7 in. EP EP666—11s. 14d.)

Typical modern Dixieland, very white and polite, with Peanuts Hucko playing thin-toned clarinet, Kaminsky his usual brassy self and Cutty Cutshall fitting in a competent but unexciting trombone part. The rest are just content to accompany. Nothing happens; perhaps, where numbers as threadbare as these are concerned, it's asking rather a lot to expect that anything should. When I saw what the EP's title was, I shuddered, but luckily the track bearing that name is not as bad as it might be, although it's still pretty vulgar. O.K.

Rolf Kuhn Quartet

"Streamline"

Keystone: Laura: Swingin' Till The Girls Come Home: Love Is Here To Stay: Bright Pace/Street Of Dreams: Pow!: I Remember You: Rolf's Tune: Streamline.

(Vanguard 12 in. LP PPL11009—35s. 10d.)

Rolf Kuhn, a German-born clarinetist, has been living in the United States since May 1956 and was recently the subject of a full-scale article and discography in *Jazz Monthly*. John Hammond, who produced this LP, refers to Kuhn in his sleeve-note as "the first potentially great jazz clarinetist since Goodman". I think Hammond overstates the case, for although Kuhn's playing is more acceptable than that of such musical bores as Buddy DeFranco and Tony Scott, he is no better than two or three notable Swedish exponents. The clarinet has

not been a popular instrument during the last decade (apparently we now live in the saxophone age) and it is quite possible that Kuhn, with Hammond's help, can ignite fresh interest in it.

Kuhn is more of a swing-style artist than an out-and-out modernist, and there are strong indications in his playing of Benny Goodman's influence. He is especially good on ballads, *Laura* being perhaps the best example on this record, and his tone remains consistent throughout his range. At the piano keyboard is Chicago-born Ronnell Bright, who toured this country recently as Sarah Vaughan's accompanist. Bright, who has the slow, meditative *I Remember You* to himself, is a sensitive accompanist and a fine soloist, often showing a hint of Oscar Peterson in some of his work. The bass and drums are in the expert hands of Joe Benjamin and Bill Clark respectively. A.M.

George Lewis and his Ragtime Band

"Jazz At Vespers"

Just A Little While To Stay Here (V): Bye And Bye (V): The Old Rugged Cross: Sometimes My Burden Is Hard (V): Down By The Riverside (V): Just A Closer Walk With Thee: Lord, You've Been Good To Me (V): When The Saints Go Marching In (V).

(London 12 in. LP LTZ-U15112—37s. 64d.)

Recorded in Oxford, Ohio over four years ago, this is a collection of more or less sacred songs and hymns, played in loose New Orleans style by the Crown Prince of New Orleans traditional jazz and his not particularly merry men. I must say that it sounds very stale to these ears. We've heard all these numbers before, not only from this particular band and those like it but also from their European imitators. In the interests of my sanity, if not those of progress, can we now please hear no more about closer walks, saints marching or having only a little while to stay here? Lengthy banjo solos and Joe Watkins' gruff vocals do nothing to lighten the tedium. All the same, if you're a George Lewis collector, I suppose you won't be able to do without the record. O.K.

Thelonious Monk

"Thelonious Himself"

April In Paris: I Don't Stand A Ghost Of A Chance With You: Functional: I'm Getting Sentimental Over You/I Should Care: 'Round About Midnight: All Alone: Monk's Mood.

(London 12 in. LP LTZ-U15120—37s. 64d.)

To say that ideas are more important in an art form than technical elegance is to state the obvious. Yet platitudes like this sometimes need hammering home, for jazz fans, in common with the addicts of almost every other art, are fond of confusing the flashy with the brilliant, the difficult with the profound. In this context the case of a musician like Thelonious Monk is especially interesting, for despite his moments of downright clumsiness, his faltering and fumbling, nothing can alter the fact that his music communicates more expressively than that of almost any other living jazz pianist. It is hard and stark, often superficially rather ugly, but these qualities are inseparable from its power; Monk uses sour harmonies and the occasional brutal phrase as cunningly and with the same intent as poets like Yeats or Hardy inserted a dissonant word to give bite to a line.

The fact is, of course, that far from being a tasteful decorator, as so many modern pianists are, Thelonious Monk is a man who genuinely composes at the keyboard. 'Round About Midnight, Monk's Mood and the lengthy blues, *Functional* are three of his official compositions heard on this record. Yet Monk's explorations of other men's melodies are just as creative and certainly quite as personal. He transforms ballads like *April In Paris* at a fundamental level, shifting their accents, altering their entire conception. Sometimes the effect is too tentative, too frags mentary—as in *I Should Care*—but in most case-

the chosen melody takes on new power and significance.

"I sound like James P. Johnson," said Monk after hearing the play-back of *Functional*. The comparison was not as far-fetched as it sounds, for although the details of Monk's playing are modern his approach is completely traditional. He is a complete pianist, too, in the way that Johnson was, needing—as he shows here—no bassist or drummer to augment his solos. Monk might not aim at swinging as much as at creating intensity, yet everything he essays has a steady rhythmic pulse and carries a sense of urgency. All these tracks were recorded in April 1957, and on all but one Monk is entirely on his own. Tenor-saxist John Coltrane and bassist Wilbur Ware join him on *Monk's Mood*; their presence, far from adding to or detracting from the music, just seems rather irrelevant. C.F.

"Midnight In Tokyo"

Volume I

Hamabe No Uta: Blue Room (Shoji Suzuki and his Rhythm Aces); **Stopper**: Willow Weep For Me (Akira Watanabe and his Embers Five); **Aoi Me No Ningyo**: Perfidia (Fumio Matsumoto and his Music Makers); **Hanayome Ningyo**: Yuyake Koyake (Toru Mori and his Six Points Plus One); **Vibraphone Rhapsody** (Seiji Hiraoka Quintet); **Koko Ni Sachi Ari**: Tai-ko-sen (Hiroshi Watanabe and his Star Dusters).

(London 12 in. LP LTZ15124—37s. 6½d.)

There is something subtopian about the way jazz sounds exactly the same in London and Tokyo. The tracks on this LP, for instance, could just as easily have been recorded at some of the lesser London jazz-clubs or dance-halls. The depressing difference, of course, is that the record purports to present Japanese jazz at its best.

There must be some subtle significance in the fact that only on the vibraphone do these Japanese musicians sound at all relaxed. Seiji Hiraoka swings pleasantly during the faster sections of his *Vibraphone Rhapsody*, otherwise a rather naive work, and Ryusei Matsuzaki plays fleetly with Shoji Suzuki's Rhythm Aces. The latter group, modelling itself upon the Benny Goodman Quartet, produces the best music on the LP.

The remaining tracks are painfully dull. Akira Watanabe's group plays rather weedy modern jazz, while Toru Mori—a trombonist in the Teagarden style—leads a plodding Dixieland band. The two big orchestras—those of Fumio Matsumoto and Hiroshi Watanabe—never rise above the level of second-rate palais bands. C.F.

Gerry Mulligan-Paul Desmond Quartet

Blues Intime: Body and Soul; **Standstill/Line For Lyons**: Wintersong; **Battle Hymn of the Republican**: Fall Out.

(Columbia-Clef 12 in. LP 38CX10113—41s. 8½d.)

Recorded last August, this LP is the first opportunity we have had of hearing baritone saxist Gerry Mulligan and alto saxist Paul Desmond playing together. It is also the first time that Desmond has appeared on a locally released album without the assistance of pianist Dave Brubeck. Let me say at once that the results of this pairing are productive and interesting. Each of the main participants has had experience in small jazz units utilizing contrapuntal and fugal effects and their temperaments are completely compatible. Furthermore, both Desmond and Mulligan are neat, melodic improvisers whose lines are rounded and flowing. Neither is given to incoherence or disjointed phrasing, and there is a delightful feeling of freshness and freedom present on all seven tracks. Apart from some of the framing choruses, I presume the performances are spontaneous creations, which makes the two-part passages all the more impressive.

Both saxists are given ample opportunities

to take extended solos backed only by Joe Benjamin's superb bass and Dave Bailey's intelligent drumming; *Blues Intime* and *Body And Soul* each last for nearly nine minutes, the latter containing Gerry's best individual contribution. Desmond constructs a fine lyrical and logical solo on *Wintersong* (harmonically *These Foolish Things*) which is one of the best he has recorded. There are times when the playing is strongly reminiscent of the Lee Konitz-Gerry Mulligan collaborations, although Desmond's tone has more warmth than Konitz's. It is some measure of the leaders' inventive powers to say that despite the skeletal routines and the limited instrumentation, I found the album remained stimulating and rewarding after repeated playings. Although listed as original compositions, *Standstill*, *Battle Hymn* and *Fall Out* use, respectively, the chord sequences of *My Heart Stood Still*, *Tea For Two* and *Let's Fall In Love*. A.M.

Charlie Parker

"Jazz Perennial"

Segment: I'm In The Mood For Love: **Blues (Fast)**: Ballade: **Celebrity**: She Rote: **Un Poquito De Tu Amor**: Tico, Tico/Swedish Schnapps: **Mama Inez**: La Paloma: **The Song Is You**: **Laird Baird**: **Kim**: **Cosmic Ray**: **If I Love Again**.

(Columbia 12 in. LP 38CX10117—41s. 8½d.)

Hard upon the heels of "The Immortal Charlie Parker", the five London LPs which I reviewed last month, comes this excellent set, taking up the history of Parker at the point where the previous records left off. It was in 1948 that Parker began recording for Norman Granz, and he continued to do so until his death just over three years ago. During that time he performed—as you can hear on these tracks—with widely differing groups of musicians, some of them admirable, others wildly inept. And just as the London LPs presented a mass of hitherto unused versions of Parker recordings, this one contains "takes" of *She Rote* and *Swedish Schnapps* that differ considerably from those already available here.

Parker's alto can be heard at its most lyrical in *The Song Is You* and *Cosmic Ray*, two tracks that rank among his finest. Together with *Kim* and *Laird Baird* these were made in December, 1952, with the alto-saxist accompanied by pianist Hank Jones, bassist Teddy Kotick and drummer Max Roach. *Swedish Schnapps*, recorded a year earlier with trumpeter Red Rodney, John Lewis, Ray Brown and Kenny Clarke, is almost as good; so is *Ballade*, on which Parker was partnered by another great jazz musician—Coleman Hawkins, happily at his most eloquent on this occasion. Both *Ballade* and *Celebrity* (the latter without Hawkins) come off the soundtrack of a film which Norman Granz produced in 1950 but never released.

The superb modern-style rhythm section of Al Haig, Tommy Potter and Max Roach, together with trumpeter Kenny Dorham, supported Parker on one track only—the 1949 recording of *Segment*. On the remaining titles, apart from *If I Love Again*, Parker can be heard with trumpeters Miles Davis and Bennie Harris, pianist Walter Bishop Jr., and drummers Buddy Rich, Roy Haynes and two Latin-American specialists, in addition to the musicians already mentioned. The level of all these tracks is very high, as far as Parker's own solos are concerned. Frankly I find the Latin-American items rather a waste of Parker's genius, but *Mama Inez* and *Tico, Tico* must be counted as his most successful voyages into that idiom.

The only real oddity is *If I Love Again*. Much as I admire Gil Evans as an arranger, the setting he has devised seems completely incongruous. Performed by the Dave Lambert Singers and an octet of French horn, clarinet,

oboe, flute, bassoon and rhythm, it produces a background that made me think I was listening to *musique concrète*. C.F.

Playboy Jazz All Stars

Volume I

Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans? (V) (Louis Armstrong All Stars); **Rockin' Chair** (V) (Jack Teagarden with Louis Armstrong All Stars); **When Buddha Smiles** (Benny Goodman orchestra); **Date With Oscar** (Lionel Hampton Quintet); **Fine's Idea** (Charlie Ventura with Gene Krupa Trio); **Oh! Look At Me Now** (V) (Frank Sinatra with Tommy Dorsey orchestra); **Theme & Harlem Folk Dance** (Stan Kenton orchestra); **Play, Boy!** (Shorty Rogers orchestra); **The Sophisticated Rabbit** (Shelly Manne Quintet); **Blues For Mary Jane** (Stan Getz Quartet); **Who, Me?** (Kai Winding Septet).

(Columbia-Playboy 12 in. LP 38CX1520)

Volume II

I Concentrate On You (V) (Ella Fitzgerald); **Joogie Boogie** (Dizzy Gillespie orchestra); **Tangerine** (Bud Shank Quartet); **A Playboy In Love** (Barney Kessel Quartet); **Love Is Here To Stay** (J. J. Johnson Quintet); **Pilgrim's Progress** (Paul Desmond with Dave Brubeck Quartet); **Band Aid** (Chet Baker Quartet); **Bass Ball** (Ray Brown); **Bobbie's Tune** (Bob Brookmeyer Quintet); **Utter Chaos** (Gerry Mulligan Quintet).

(Columbia-Playboy 12 in. LP 38CX1530)

Two 12 in. LPs in two-pocket album—83s. 5d.

These records cannot be purchased separately.

Items marked † have already been issued in Britain.

One can usually predict which jazz musicians will win the various popularity polls, and the 1957 poll sponsored by *Playboy*, the American magazine, proved no exception. That magazine, however, has chosen to give a tangible form to the choice of its readers by issuing these 12-inch LPs, containing tracks by all the winners plus a few of the runners-up. Several of the major American companies loaned their artists or permitted the use of their material, so quite a few items come into rather surprising juxtaposition. The compilation was done in the United States and in the case of two artists—Frank Sinatra and Stan Kenton—it appears as if the recording company concerned did not care to co-operate. The result is that both Sinatra and the Kenton orchestra are represented by very early and rather untypical examples of their work. Naturally the level of any anthology of this kind is bound to be uneven, but on the whole this is a reasonably good collection, presenting quite a high proportion of new material, and the two records are packaged in a very attractive album, containing nine pages of notes by Leonard Feather.

Do You Know What It Means and Rockin' Chair are both good examples of Louis Armstrong's work, the former recorded at a concert in Chicago in 1956, the latter made in 1947 and featuring the trombone playing and singing of Jack Teagarden. Fletcher Henderson's arrangement of *When Buddha Smiles* moves as lithely as it did when Benny Goodman first recorded it in 1936, but this 1951 re-creation finds Benny and the band sounding just a little more staid. The conjunction of Lionel Hampton and Oscar Peterson, two of the most swinging musicians in jazz, on *Date With Oscar* produces lively, exhilarating jazz without getting very profound. On the other hand, Charlie Ventura's rabble-rousing tenor work on *Fine's Idea* is easily the low-spot on the whole LP. The first side ends with a recording Frank Sinatra made with Tommy Dorsey's orchestra back in January, 1941, just before he became the bobby-soxers' idol; Frankie sounds younger but already very individual and there is some incisive piano playing by Joe Bushkin.

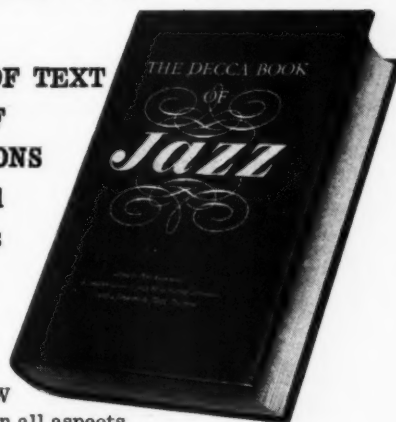
Recorded from a broadcast at Balboa Beach in 1940, *Harlem Folk Dance* and a snatch of *Artistry In Rhythm*, with swing-period solos from trumpeter Chico Alvarez and alto-saxist Jack Ordean, hardly give a fair picture of Stan Kenton's music. Apart from Lou Levy's

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concise piano work, *Play, Boy!*, by Shorty Rogers big band, is rather a turgid affair. Much better is *The Sophisticated Rabbit*, with solos from Stu Williamson (trumpet), Russ Freeman (piano) and Charlie Mariano (alto sax) fitting neatly around some intelligent and well-integrated drumming by the leader. The best track on this side, though, is *Blues For Mary Jane*, on which Stan Getz meanders gently but subtly for a total of eighteen choruses. *Who, Me?* presents a front-line of Kai Winding and three fellow trombonists; there is clever interplay, a rich ensemble sound and some good solo playing by Kai himself.

Ella Fitzgerald's *I Concentrate On You*, recorded in 1956 with a four-piece rhythm section, is entirely different from the version she made for "Ella Sings The Cole Porter Song Book". Like almost everything Ella does nowadays, it is beautifully sung. Also outstandingly good is Dizzy Gillespie's big band performance of *Joogie Boogie*, a simple but powerful blues that rocks along at medium tempo; there is fragile muted playing by Dizzy himself and some robust piano passages from Wynnton Kelly. Bud Shank's *Tangerine* has sprightly alto work from the leader and deft piano playing by Claude Williamson, but is slowed down by Chuck Flores' heavy-handed drumming. Barney Kessel shows rather more awareness of tonal dynamics than usual in an attractive *Playboy In Love*, a performance that ranges from being almost out-of-tempo to swinging along quite nimbly. On the American issue of this record, the final track was J. J. Johnson's *Joey, Joey, Joey*, but copyright restrictions prevented its use over here; instead, J. J. plays the trombone in a smooth, elegant interpretation of *Love Is Here To Stay*.

Pilgrim's Progress was recorded during the Dave Brubeck Quartet's appearance at the 1956 Stratford Festival in Canada; it is rather an undistinguished example of Brubeck's music, with Desmond sounding far too faun-like, Brubeck chording ponderously and the drummer thudding behind them. Chet Baker's 1953 recording of *Band Aid* has some typically gutless trumpet playing by the leader. Valve-trombonist Bob Brookmeyer seems to have grown into a more vigorous soloist since he made *Bobbie's Tune* (in 1956), the liveliest moments in which come from Zoot Sims' tenor sax and Hank Jones' piano. Rounding off the album is Gerry Mulligan's theme tune, *Utter Chaos*, recorded during a concert by the Quartet at Boston in 1956. This is spirited music, with a lively interchange of ideas between Mulligan and Brookmeyer. C.F.

Bud Powell

"The Genius of Bud Powell"
Fantasy in Blue: Moonlight in Vermont/
Buttercup: Spring Is Here.
(Columbia 7 in. EP SEB10094—11s. 10d.)

A new Bud Powell release is something of a jazz occasion, and although this EP does not present the pianist at his very best it is still worth purchasing. No other contemporary keyboard artist plays with Bud's tenseness and urgency; as a virtuoso performer he is unique, despite his many imitators. *Buttercup*, dedicated to Powell's wife, is the tune used to introduce the B.B.C.'s "World of Jazz" programme each week; Joe Newman's sextet version is heard on the radio but the composer's interpretation is the definitive one. *Moonlight In Vermont* and *Spring Is Here* reveal Powell's melodic and romantic side at slow tempo; the stark opening chords of the latter compel the listener's attention from the first bar, but later on Bud interpolates some Tatum-like cascades to good effect. Bass player George Duvivier and drummer Art Taylor accompany Powell on these four fascinating performances. A.M.

Specs Powell

"Movin' In"
Undecided: All Or Nothing At All: It's A
Pity To Say Goodnight: You Don't Know
What Love Is: The Spider: Rat Race/Suspension:
Locked Out: He's My Guy: I'll Remember April: Disposed: Movin' In.
(Columbia 12 in. LP 33SX1083—35s. 10d.)

"Wow!!!!!" shouts Dizzie (sic) Gillespie somewhere in the middle of his enthusiastic sleeve-notes. Alas, although this music is uncommonly pleasant it just doesn't have enough character to wow anybody. Ray Copeland's arrangements, while making an ideal framework for the soloists, lack dynamics in their own right. And the soloists, anyway, sound coy and lacking in lustre. Sahib Shihab blows lyrical but rather too polite alto throughout most of *You Don't Know What Love Is* and Hank Jones is surprisingly dull in *Suspension*, his feature number. Best of the tracks is *The Spider*, one of four originals by Specs Powell, which rocks along engagingly and has some spacious muted trumpet work from Ray Copeland. Copeland plays better here, in fact, than on *He's My Guy*, where he is featured in a sweeter and much trickier solo. Leon Merian, the other trumpeter, sounds cooler but takes airy, springing choruses in *It's A Pity To Say Goodnight*.

As usual Jimmy Cleveland seems over-aware of his technical skill on the trombone, while Aaron Sachs is just plain dull, whether playing clarinet or tenor sax. Luckily Specs Powell drums inspiringly and is well supported by bassist Clyde Lombardi and the piano of Nat Pierce or Hank Jones, depending upon which tracks you pick. Copeland's arrangement of *Undecided*, by the way, kicks off and closes with a three-note phrase very similar to one Bud Shank scored for three trombones and called *Wailing Vessel*. Anyway, until the release came, I was fooled into thinking the group was playing *Spring Is Here*. C.F.

Neva Raphaelo with the Dutch Swing

College Band
Some Of These Days: 2.19 Blues/I Ain't Got
Nobody: Am I Blue?
(Philips 7 in. EP BBE12162—12s. 10d.)

With her big voice and good blues sense (rather wasted on "pops"—even such good ones as these), Neva Raphaelo puts up an excellent showing. *Some Of These Days*, performed up-tempo, is the best track, although it's good to hear an up-to-date Dixieland treatment of *Am I Blue?* a song I remember Ethel Waters recording on Columbia long, long ago. The Dutch lads may not be the greatest musicians to emerge since Jelly Roll Morton and King Oliver, but the easy swing and cohesion of their playing gets them by. O.K.

Rita Reys

"The Cool Voice of Rita Reys"
It's All Right With Me: Gone With The Wind:
My Funny Valentine: But Not For Me/I Cried
For You: You'd Be So Nice To Come Home
To: My One And Only Love: That Old Black
Magic.
(Philips 10 in. LP BBR8120—29s. 2½d.)

Rita Reys is a Dutch vocalist who visited America in the spring of 1956. Her voice is inoffensive and generally unremarkable, her pronunciation of certain English words in the song lyrics rather quaint. One side of the LP was recorded in Holland, and on these four tracks Rita was accompanied by a Dutch jazz group under the leadership of her husband, drummer Wes Ilken. In fact Ilken's drumming is one of the best features of this record, for he plays with good taste and an understanding of dynamics akin to that of Ed Shaughnessy.

The tracks on the reverse side were recorded in New York, and on *I Cried For You*, *You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To* and *That Old Black Magic* Rita is backed by Art Blakey's Jazz

Messengers (Horace Silver, Donald Byrd, Hank Mobley, Doug Watkins and Blakey himself). Her singing is better on the American-made tracks, but using the unsympathetic Jazz Messengers as a backing was a mistake. Robert Mellin's *My One And Only Love* is the most successful track, with pianist Kenny Drew, bassist Wilbur Ware and tenor saxist Ira Sullivan replacing Silver, Watkins and Mobley. Incidentally, I think someone at Philips might have amended George Avakian's sleeve note to include the information that Wes Ilken died about nine months ago. A.M.

Don Rendell Jazz Six

"Packet of Blues"
Packet Of Blues/My Friend Tom: Tickletoe.
(Decca 7 in. EP DFE6501—11s. 5½d.)

It is ironic that this excellent EP should appear in the shops only a few weeks after the disbanding of Don Rendell's Jazz Six. Undoubtedly this was the best personnel ever to play under Don's leadership and, for once, a recording has been produced which does justice to this fine little band. Bert Courtney's *Packet Of Blues* is a memorable performance, containing a trumpet solo by the composer which I feel sure could not be bettered; despite an occasional echo of Clark Terry, Bert seems now to have found his own style. *My Friend Tom* is a pleasing Rendell original with solos from all four front-line men (Don, Bert, trombonist Eddie Harvey and baritone saxist Ronnie Ross). Eddie Harvey backs up the others on piano for Lester Young's *Tickletoe*, taking his place in a rhythm section completed by bassist Pete Blannin and drummer Andy White. A.M.

Pete Rugolo And His All Stars

"Out On A Limb"
Don't Play The Melody: In A Modal Tone:
Early Duke: Nancy: Sunday, Monday Or
Always/The Boy Next Door: Cha-Lito Linda:
Ballade For Drums: Smoke Gets In Your
Eyes: Repetitious Riff.
(EmArcy 12 in. LP EJJ1274—35s. 10d.)

"I didn't restrict myself to a rule that every bar had to swing," writes arranger Pete Rugolo in the sleeve note. After reading such an honest admission I felt in a more receptive frame of mind. This is an interesting record, Rugolo indulging in a little experimentation without sounding too pretentious. *Early Duke* is a successful attempt at creating the sound of the 1940 Ellington band, with Milt Bernhart and Ronnie Lang quite effective in the roles of Nanton and Hodges. On *Nancy* Rugolo discovered that the harmonies corresponded with those of *Body And Soul*, so he wrote in part of Johnny Green's melody for Don Fagerquist to play over the saxes. The remaining tracks vary from Frank Rosolino's swift-paced trombone solo on *Don't Play The Melody* to Shelly Manne's percussive excursion on *Ballade For Drums*. Within the confines of big-band instrumentation Rugolo has experimented with sounds, using unusual groups of voicings rather than the more normal section-by-section writing. I found most of the results to be entirely satisfactory even though they sometimes lack jazz content. A.M.

Eddie South

Sweet Georgia Brown: Eddie's Blues/Somebody Loves Me: I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me.
(H.M.V. 7 in. EP 7EG8901—11s. 1½d.)

When I praised the Eddie South-Stephane Grappelly duets (H.M.V. 7EG8324) last April it was in fairly ecstatic terms. Now H.M.V. have done even better and issued the four finest sides from those 1937 Paris sessions, including the superb *Eddie's Blues*, a ravishing performance and easily the greatest example of violin-playing in jazz—and I have not over looked Stuff Smith's many brilliant solos. For the blues and *Somebody Loves Me*, South's sole

accompanist was the late Django Reinhardt, not only the best jazz musician Europe has so far produced but also one of the two greatest jazz guitarists (the other was Charlie Christian). The exceptionally intimate musical partnership established between these two men is maintained throughout *Sweet Georgia Brown*, with bassist Wilson Myers added, and *I Can't Believe*, on which Paul Dordonnier replaced Myers. I recommend this EP unreservedly to anybody who doubts that jazz can be played on the violin; I recommend it just as unreservedly to anyone who just likes good jazz. Eddie South must be one of the most undervalued musicians in jazz history and it is time people woke up to the fact. C.F.

George Shearing Quintet

"A Shearing Caravan"
Pick Yourself Up: I Didn't Know What Time It Was: Body And Soul: Little White Lies: Spring Is Here: The Breeze And I: Stranger In Paradise: Undecided/The Lady Is A Tramp: I'll Remember April: Easy To Love: Love Is Just Around The Corner: Indian Summer: I've Never Been In Love Before: Caravan: Hallelujah!
(M.-G.-M. 12 in. LP C767—35s. 10d.)

"Quintessence"
Quintessence: Brain Wave/Minor Trouble: Cynthia (V).
(M.-G.-M. 7 in. EP EP642—11s. 14d.)

Some of the twenty titles presented here have appeared previously as standard speed releases. With eight titles on each side, the LP represents very good value for money, covering a period beginning with the earlier sessions (*Little White Lies*, *I'll Remember April*, etc.) and coming up to March, 1954 (*Stranger In Paradise*). The Shearing formula must, by now, be familiar; on most tracks the group plays the opening and closing sections, framing short guitar and vibes solos followed by a longer piano passage. Guitarist Chuck Wayne (heard on six tracks) is superior to Toots Thielmans, but suffers in some places from imperfect recording balance; vibraphonist Cal Tjader (present on a dozen of the titles) shows the potential brilliance which he has since brought to fruition. Thielmans takes a lengthy mouth-organ solo on *Body And Soul*, while all hands are turned to the Latin percussion department for *Caravan*.

The EP continues the same set pattern, the only exception being that *Cynthia* has an uncredited and somewhat dolorous vocal. Presumably this is by Chuck Wayne, who sometimes sang with the Quintet during his term of service. Both LP and EP sleeves carry full personnel and recording details. A.M.

Sonny Stitt

"New York Jazz"
Norman's Blues: I Know That You Know: If I Had You: Alone Together: Twelfth Street Rag/Down Home Blues: Sonny's Tune: Stars Fell On Alabama: Body And Soul: Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea.
(Columbia 12 in. LP 33CX10114—41s. 84d.)

"Mr. Saxophone"
Nevertheless: Jeepers Creepers/P.S. I Love You: This Can't Be Love.
(Esquire 7 in. EP EP191—13s. 74d.)

Sonny Stitt—slim, undemonstrative, scarcely looking his 34 years—seems to have impressed British jazz critics more than almost anybody else in "Jazz At The Philharmonic"—apart from the blissful Ella, of course. Here was a musician whose solos were full of urgency, who could play with searing vehemence and power. Some people still write-off Stitt as being just an imitator of Charlie Parker, and it is true that a lot of Parker's phrases crop up in his solos and that he displays the same probing intensity. Listen to *Down Home Blues* if you doubt it. But one can discover just as much—perhaps even more—of Lester Young in his playing too. In any case, the vital point is

that whatever Stitt may have borrowed from those great musicians he is using it to communicate a very personal set of ideas.

The Columbia LP contains some of the finest playing I've ever heard from Stitt. Using both alto and tenor saxes, he is backed up by a sympathetic and swinging group: Jimmy Jones—an ideal choice as pianist, Ray Brown and Jo Jones. Most of the time this is earthy, hard-blown jazz, with Stitt surpassing himself in some inspired blues-playing and explosive interpretations of the ballads. *Twelfth Street Rag*, treated very light-heartedly, brings out the swashbuckling side of his musical temperament. It is true, as Nat Hentoff points out—very frankly—in his admirable sleeve-notes, that Stitt runs through the changes far too often, but this meaningless and irritating mannerism is only a minor flaw upon what is rapidly becoming a major talent.

The Esquire EP consists of four performances from 1950 and 1951. They present a rather more immature musician, with the influence of Lester Young omnipresent, as shown in the tenor solos on *Nevertheless* and *Jeepers Creepers*. The litheness and enthusiasm of Stitt's playing, however, always makes it worth hearing. The remaining two tracks, originally issued here on a 78, have Stitt playing baritone sax and using that rather cumbersome instrument in a very expressive and surprisingly tender way; the only drawback is that the rhythm section moves far too sluggishly. C.F.

Don Stratton Quintet

"Modern Jazz With Dixieland Roots"
Black Bottom: Royal Garden Blues/Charles-ton: Sunday.
(H.M.V. 7 in. EP 7EG8354—11s. 14d.)

Although it features contemporary-style jazzmen, this record attempts to broaden the scope of today's jazz by using older material. Don Stratton has worked in the trumpet sections of the Buddy Morrow, Claude Thornhill and Elliott Lawrence bands, but this was his first date as a leader. On *Charleston* and *Royal Garden Blues* he is joined by trumpeter Phil Sunkel (also a promising new jazz composer) and the piano-bass-drums team of Johnny Williams, Chuck Andrus and Karl Kiffe. The two-trumpet sound is exhilarating, Stratton and Sunkel creating contrasting colours by the use of different mutes. Both men play logically and with vigour, although the sleeve-notes fail to identify exactly who plays which solos. On *Sunday* and *Black Bottom* tenor saxist Dick Hafer and pianist Dave McKenna replace Sunkel and Williams; Hafer, an ex-Woody Herman "brother", sounds in places remarkably like our own Don Rendell.

This is enjoyable, uncomplicated jazz with a character of its own. I trust EMI will now release the remainder of the ABC Paramount LP from which these four tracks were taken. A.M.

Billy Taylor Trio

"At The London House"
The London House: It Might As Well Be Spring: Gone With The Wind: Love Is Here To Stay/Midnight Piano: I Cover The Waterfront: Stella By Starlight.
(H.M.V. 12 in. LP CLP1176—35s. 10d.)

Billy Taylor must be one of the most accomplished jazz pianists in America today. As well as possessing a clean, precise technique, he can swing gently and easily; in addition he is able to fashion melodic lines that stretch for half a chorus or more. Yet there is something essentially passive about his work, a delicacy that seems to inhibit him from boldness. Taylor, in fact, is primarily an impressionist, his playing sensitive and reticent rather than audacious. For this reason he sounds at his best on ballads, where his subtle harmonic sense and his talent for spinning lacy, rather

fragile patterns fit in ideally. His version of *Gone With The Wind*, incidentally, is performed entirely with the left hand; a pleasant little exercise in virtuosity. When Taylor turns to the blues, however, as he does on the eight-minute *Midnight Piano*, his playing not only lacks real sympathy for the idiom but even grows a little monotonous through its lack of formal or emotional development.

Both bassist Earl May and drummer Percy Brice, who make up the other two-thirds of the Trio, perform very capably. The performance was taped in July 1956 during a session the Trio played before an audience at the London House in Chicago; because of that a certain amount of crowd noises creep in behind the music. Maybe this LP is not quite so good as the collection of "Evergreens" (H.M.V. DLP1171) which Alun Morgan reviewed in June; nevertheless such a distinction is purely relative, and anyone wanting to hear tasteful, cleanly played piano jazz, moody rather than intense, more light-hearted than exciting, is likely to find this a very enjoyable record. C.F.

IN BRIEF

Kenny Baker And His Orchestra. *Trumpet Blues And Cantabile/Bakerloo Non-Stop*. (Nixa 7 in. standard 7N15146—6s. 74d.)

Backed by a piano-less, brassy-sounding band, Kenny Baker turns in two crowd-pleasing performances in virtuoso style. *Bakerloo Non-Stop* was one of Kenny's feature numbers in his Ted Heath days, while the reverse will be remembered by every Harry James enthusiast. A string section makes a brief appearance on the latter side and the jazz content is practically negligible. A.M.

Eartha Kitt. "St. Louis Blues". *St. Louis Blues: Beale Street Blues: Chantel-les Bas: Hesitating Blues: Sins Away: Careless Love/Alabama Blues: Long Gone: Hot! The Window, Noah: Yellow Dog Blues: Friendless Blues: Memphis Blues*. (R.C.A. 12 in. LP RD27076—37s. 64d.)

Getting Eartha Kitt and Nat "King" Cole to play the leading roles in "St. Louis Blues", the film biography of W. C. Handy, was a disastrous piece of miscasting. It has now spurred Miss Kitt into recording twelve songs either written or adapted by Handy. Although Miss Kitt's feline, wide-eyed manner makes her a vivacious cabaret performer, when she sings blues it is in a style suggestive of both Marlene Dietrich and the late Nellie Wallace. She is no better on spirituals either, while *Long Gone* could be the work of a local skiffle. Shorty Rogers leads the accompanying group, a Dixieland version of his Giants, featuring good tone solos by Joe Schneider and Nick Fatool's excellent drumming. C.F.

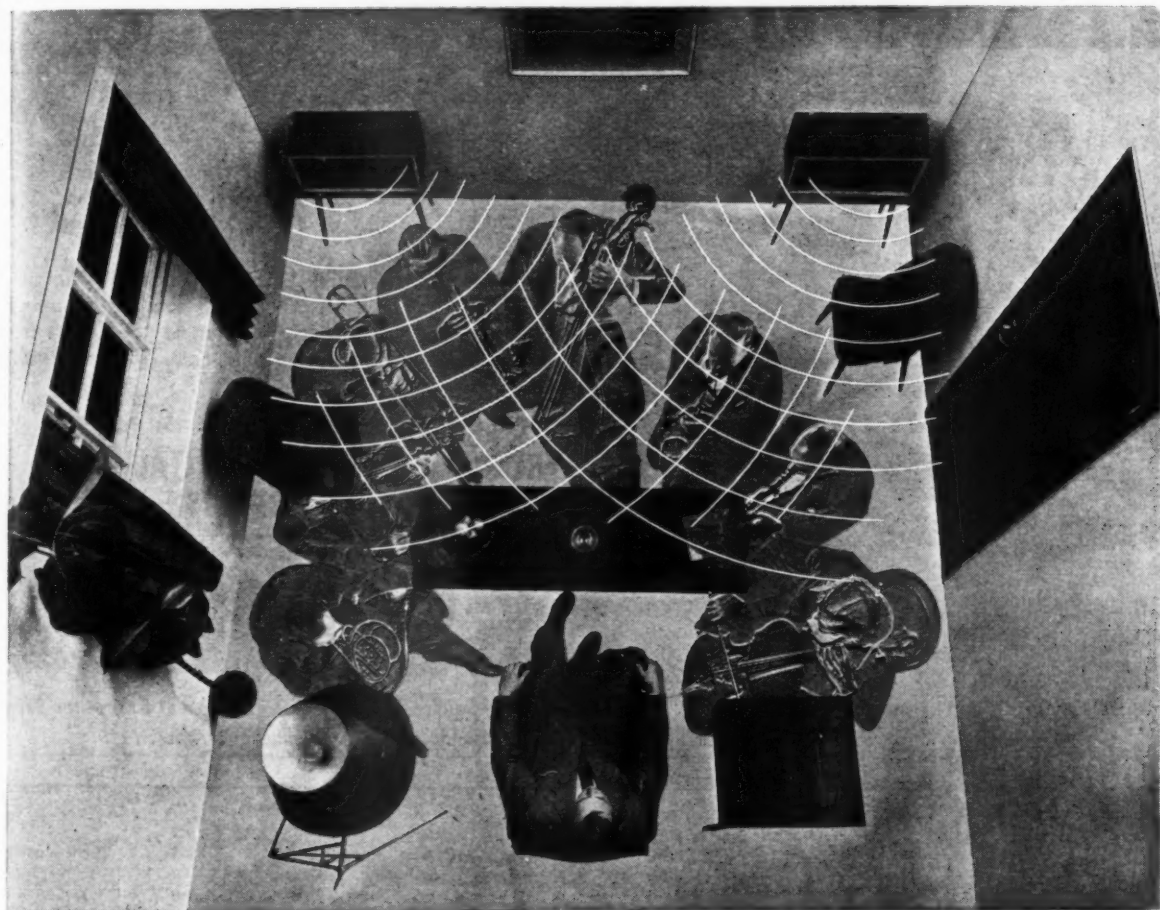
Marian McPartland. "It's De-Lovely". *Flamingo: It's De-Lovely: Liebestraume No. 3: Four Brothers*. (Parlophone 7 in. EP GEP8677—11s. 14d.)

Recorded a few years ago, these four tracks feature Marian McPartland's piano aided by Bob Carter's bough and Don Lamond's drums. For some strange reason a 'cello and harp were added, thereby encumbering what was probably quite a good piano-bass-drums trio. The overall effect is not too offensive on the slow *Flamingo* or Liszt's *Liebestraume*, although the results hardly qualify as jazz; on the other two tracks, however, the 'cello and harp drag the music below the level of mere mediocrity. A.M.

Joe Williams. "A Man Ain't Supposed To Cry". *What's New: It's The Talk Of The Town: I'll Never Smile Again: I'm Thru With Love: Where Are You: I've Only Myself To Blame: Say It Isn't So: What Will I Tell My Heart: You've Got Me Crying Again: Can't We Talk It Over: I Laugh To Keep From Crying: A Man Ain't Supposed To Cry*. (Columbia 12 in. LP 3PSX1087—35s. 10d.)

Admirers of Joe Williams' blues-shouting with Count Basie will find this a bit on the weepy side. Jimmy Mundy's arrangements use strings quite excessively and the performances stress sentiment rather than swing. As usual, Williams' voice is rich, his range surprising. Many people, in fact, will think his versions of these ballads soothing and delightful, just as I find them soft and maudlin. C.F.

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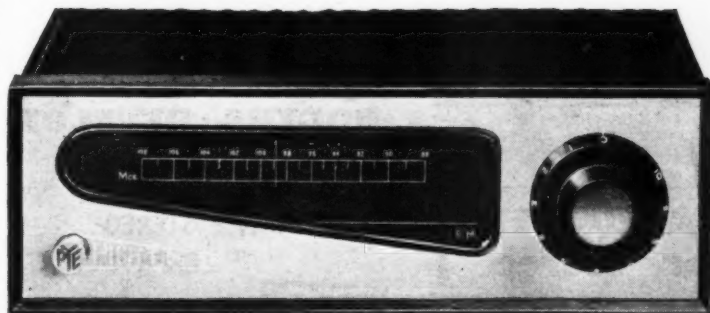

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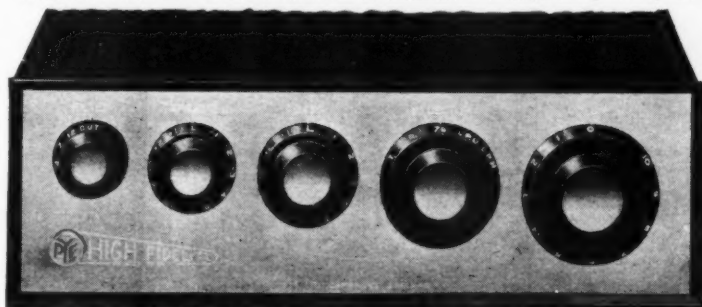
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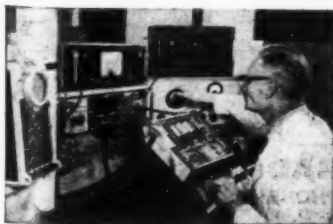
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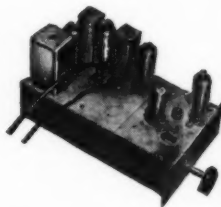


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DAMPING FACTORS

By G. A. BRIGGS

IN his excellent paper on Design Considerations for High Quality Monitoring Loudspeakers, given to the I.E.E. on April 23rd, 1958, and published in the I.E.E. Journal, Vol. 105, Mr. D. E. L. Shorter drew attention to the loss of bass with high flux magnet systems driven by amplifiers with very low output resistance and suggested as a remedy the use of smaller magnets and bigger amplifiers.

The main purpose of this article is to consider the proposed remedy from the economic and domestic angle; but before taking off my coat for the fray I should like to mention that two monitoring loudspeakers recently developed for the B.B.C. were demonstrated in a room of moderate size before and after the lecture. Axial response virtually flat between 100 and 12,000 c/s with a rise below 100 c/s had been achieved by liberal use of correction in amplifier and speaker circuits, together with low flux magnets for the 15 in. bass units.

Listening to the speakers, I formed the impression that they lived up to their excellent response curves and would be hard to beat for monitoring work; but it does not follow that they would sound right at home. We must remember that a recording engineer usually sits in a small, unfurnished, acoustically treated room (feeding chunks of artificial echo into miles of "pop" tapes much of the time) with the monitor speaker playing straight into his left ear so that he can hear what is going on in the studio.

For domestic use, where room resonances often boost the bass and soft furnishings mop up the "top", a flat response is usually unsatisfactory, because nobody wants to be in the direct line of fire from the speaker. A rise of 3 dB per octave in the treble and quasi omnidirectional working are a better objective.

But let us return to our muttens. (Under the circumstances—B.B.C. and all that—I dare not say sheep!)

I am against the advocacy of low flux magnets for domestic use for several reasons. Flux density is what we loudspeaker makers buy in Sheffield, and if high flux is not really necessary I calculate that, during the last ten years, I have paid £120,000 more than I need have done to magnet makers. This is a disturbing thought; I could retire on half the amount.

But high flux gives us efficiency, better transient response, and also better H.F. response if the pole tip is saturated, so it would appear to be sensible to reduce the amplifier damping factor with good magnets in order to maintain adequate bass.

The curves of Figs. A and B show clearly the

effect of amplifier output resistance on the response of two 10 in. speakers—identical in all respects except flux density. The first relates to a magnet with 10,000 oersteds gap field strength and the second relates to 14,000 oersteds (i.e. flux density, gauss, lines per sq. c.m. or whatever you like to call it). The curves prove, incidentally, that what Mr. Shorter says is true, which is not surprising.

We find that a damping factor of 15 gives us a loss of 3 dB at 40 c/s with 10,000 oersteds, but with the better magnet the loss becomes 10 dB. As the damping factor is reduced, the L.F. output goes up, but the critical damping factor to maintain the output and avoid bass resonance is much lower with the high flux magnet; therefore the ideal damping factor cannot be dictated arbitrarily by amplifier makers. Properly damped, the better magnet gives the best L.F. performance.

The general sensitivity of the high flux unit is better by 4 dB, which is equal to an increase of $2\frac{1}{2}$ times in amplifier power. In other words, it will give an acoustic output with a 10 watt amplifier equal to that obtained from the low flux unit with 25 watts. This reduces the risk of distortion in both amplifier and speaker.

As regards transients, the improved performance with high flux magnets hardly needs stressing; Voigt proved it more than twenty years ago.

To return to amplifiers, we all know that our amplifier makers are the golden haired boys of the audio industry, and no pickup or loudspeaker in existence (except perhaps those they make themselves) is good enough to do justice to their products. But we also know that they use NFB to get rid of dirt, and any design which needs 40 dB of feedback to clean it up must be pretty grimy to start with.

In America, high-class amplifiers are now available with variable damping factor, but this has probably been brought about by the use of the acoustic suspension type of speaker which gives good bass from a small box by resonating at about 40 c/s with a low damping factor, and is useful where room space is at a premium. A magnet with a wide gap and low flux is necessary, but this reduces sensitivity so much that a 30 watt, or even 50 watt amplifier is required for domestic use. In Great Britain, buyers would not jump to 30 watt amplifiers merely to oblige a speaker maker.

With reflex and horn loading of adequate size, L.F. performance is not so much affected by damping factor in amplifier, so high flux magnets can be satisfactory with a reasonable damping factor. With low flux magnets, a good

damping factor is essential to avoid "ringing" and probable overloading in the bass.

With baffle mounting and low resonance speakers, the position is similar to the one operating with the acoustic suspension type, except that the sensitivity is high instead of low.

It must, however, be admitted that with baffle mounting a 3 dB rise or fall in response at 40 c/s looks impressive on a response curve but is virtually inaudible on music, so one hesitates about asking amplifier makers to fit variable NFB controls. Wrongly used with a cheap speaker with high resonance frequency, the results would be very bad.

There is another way out. Where a lack of bass with a very powerful magnet is noticed, a simple method of reducing a damping factor from 15 to 2 is to place a 7-ohm resistance in series with a 15-ohm voice coil (or 1-ohm in series with a 2-ohm coil). This will avoid excessive damping below 50 c/s, and the high flux magnet will still take care of transient response and provide adequate sensitivity in spite of an average loss of 2 dB above 100 c/s, introduced by the resistor and the mismatch to amplifier. In view of the steep rise in impedance at cone resonance, the loss due to the series resistance would be negligible in that frequency range; this would also apply at very high frequencies where the impedance often rises steeply.

It is of course permissible to use reasonable bass lift in the amplifier when driving a speaker with a good magnet system, so long as the volume control is not turned up too much. (Any bass lift applied to 10 watts output from a 10-watt amplifier will overload the output stage and cause distortion.)

Because of the benefits of amplifier damping, there has been a tendency to carry it to excess. As magnets are improved and cone resonances are lowered, the need for a high damping factor recedes; in fact it becomes more of a curse than a blessing. There is so little power in records, tapes and music below 40 c/s that it is better to allow the speaker to resonate there, if it will, than to damp it out by using an absurdly low resistance source. Even 10 in. speakers are now made with a resonance below 40 c/s. A couple of these on a baffle, in parallel, will give remarkably good bass unless deliberately thwarted by the designer of the amplifier.

It is therefore to be hoped that amplifier makers will modify their zeal for excessive NFB, or else give us a mixture of voltage and current NFB so that the best speakers can give of their best. How about a switch for choice of high or low damping factor?

Just a final thought, which has nothing whatever to do with NFB. We have been told for years that the speaker is the weakest link in the reproducing chain, but recently some remarkably good sound has been heard from disc stereo. Could the weak link have really been monaural recording after all?

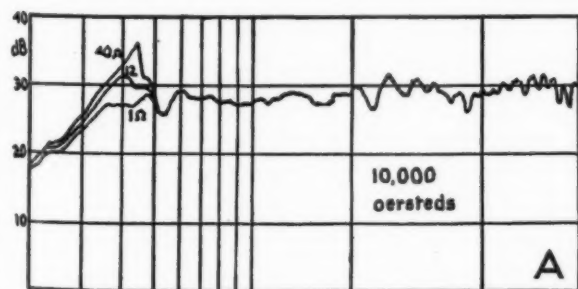


Fig. A. Open air response curves of 15Ω 10 in. unit mounted in true infinite baffle, magnet 10,000 oersteds. Taken with source resistances of 1, 12 and 40 ohms, giving damping factors of about 15, 1 and 0.4 respectively.

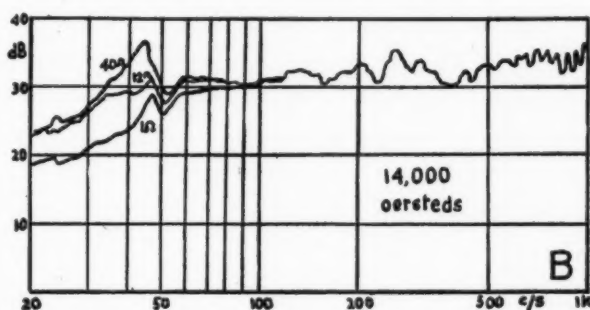


Fig. B. Same as previous figure, but magnet strength increased to 14,000 oersteds.

TECHNICAL REPORTS

BJ "Top C" Tweeter. Price £5 5s. 0d. Burne-Jones & Co. Ltd., Sunningdale Road, Cheam, Surrey.

I first saw this tweeter at the Audio Fair, though Peter Burne-Jones had discussed it with me many months previously, when I persuaded him that he needed a better tweeter unit for his corner horn assembly. Here it is, a fascinating little affair. When I first saw it I christened it "The Fairy Stool", which sounds so much more romantic than its technical trade name. It reminded me, somehow, of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs and of Alice in Wonderland. It also reminded me of Paul Voigt's Corner Horn with its double disperser, a successful design, years in advance of its time, if ever there was one.



Having seen the design and the way in which it has been worked out, I was prepared to wager that the Top C would give an altogether smoother performance than when the same driving unit is used as a direct radiator; for the shaped disperser, besides making the tweeter omni-directional, imposes an appreciable acoustic load on the unit much as a horn would. There would, of course, be an apparent loss of output due to the 360-degree radiation but the load should compensate for this to a substantial extent.

So I surmised; and was not mistaken. The tweeter does in fact behave according to plan, which means that it gives an exceptionally good response from about 2,000 c/s to well above 10 kc/s.

I particularly admire the clever construction of the disperser: it was a happy thought to have a polished metal reflector so as to avoid H.F. absorption and to attach it solidly to a wooden cap so as to avoid a sharp, resonant peak.

Last month I suggested that two column speakers in the recesses on each side of a fireplace, with two extra tweeters closer together on the mantelpiece between, would form a happy combination for stereo. They do, and I can say now with every confidence that these "Top C" tweeters are particularly suitable for the purpose. They will stand on a mantelpiece or even a tile of only 4 in. from back to front; they look decorative, and they improve both the quality and the stereo to a notable degree.

But they are also successful when used in the conventional way to extend and/or smooth out the treble response of a loudspeaker system. For this purpose they can, if desired, be linked up to a crossover system, so that the whole of the treble response comes from them, but no harm will be done if they are connected directly to the 15-ohm output of an amplifier since the base of the unit contains a blocking capacity of 4-5 m.f.d.s. to isolate the unit from the bass register. It also contains a 50-ohm potentiometer for adjustment of sensitivity, but I have so far found it well to work at maximum sensitivity. A particularly successful arrangement is to have a 5 ft. column speaker operating up to about 3,000 c/s (with 8-inch unit) and one of these tweeters taking charge above that frequency and standing on top of the column. Even when two such combinations are used for stereo with a couple of extra tweeters in between, making 4 of them altogether, the total cost is not exorbitant as prices go these days and the results are very spectacular.

All in all, then, I can confidently recommend these tweeters as quality units at a very modest cost. P.W.

Dulci GA4 Amplifier. Price: £9 9s. The Dulci Company Ltd., 97/99 Villiers Road, London, N.W.2.

Maker's Specification:

Power Supply: 200-250 volts.
A.C. Consumption: 30 watts.
Output: 4 watts, peak at 3 or 15 ohms.
Harmonic Distortion: Below 1%
Frequency Response: 40-18,000 c/s ± 2 db.
20 db negative feedback.
Hum: 65 db below maximum output.
Controls: Volume On/Off, Bass, Treble, Input selector.
Valves: EF86, EF86, EL84, EZ80 8.0 v.
0.2 a. pilot lamp.
Dimensions: Amplifier, 14 in. by 4½ in. by 5½ in. high; Control unit, 6 in. by 4 in. by 3 in. deep.

This small and inexpensive amplifier, like its larger companion reviewed by P.W. last January, is based on one of the Mullard circuits which have made such an impression on the British high-fidelity scene. The GA4 is based on the latest version of the Mullard 3-3 circuit, but the tone controls, which in the original were limited in their range by the two-stage circuit, have now been incorporated in a separate control unit with an additional EF86 valve. This has enabled the designer to provide additional amplification and incorporate pickup matching and equalisation arrangements.

The amplifier is built on a long thin chassis to enable it to become part of a small record player if required, and the mains transformer has been made rotatable to minimise hum if a magnetic cartridge is used.

The small control unit, which can be separately mounted at the end of its 18-in. leads or bracketed to the main chassis, has an attractive copper bronze panel with engraved ivory markings and knobs. The input selector has three positions, A, 78 and LP. The former is for tuner or tape recorder and its sensitivity is 200 mV for full output, but by removing an internal resistor this can be increased to 40 mV. The 78 and LP compensations give approximate correction for modern recording characteristics.

Inside the control unit is a small 9-pin plug incorporating the necessary circuit elements to match a particular type of pickup and alternatives are available.

On test the GA4 gave the following results.
Amplifier: Frequency response at 100 milliwatts output. ± 2 db between 40 and 30,000 c/s
Power/Frequency Response

Freq.	40	60	80	100	200	5 kc	7	10	15	20
Watts	.3	.4	1.8	2.3	3.1	3.1	3.0	2.8	2	1.6

Stability (3 ohm output). Instability occurred with 0.02 m.f.d. pure capacity or 0.5 m.f.d. across 3 ohms.

Control Unit: With input to "A" a response flat within ± 3 db between 50 c/s and 10 kc/s was obtained with the Bass control at mid position at Treble at near minimum (i.e. approximately 10 o'clock).

The range of controls was:

Treble at 10 kc/s -8, to +23 db.

Bass at 50 c/s -8, to +20 db.

The construction of both units is quite sound and having due regard to the extremely modest price the verdict on this amplifier must be favourable. The person, and there are many, who wants a low-powered (and low cost) equipment which within its limitations can give excellent reproduction need look no further than the GA4. G.E.H.

The Q-Flex Loudspeaker System. Price (in kit form), 14 gns. CQ Audio Ltd., Sarnesfield Road, Enfield, Middlesex.

The advertisements call this system a "radical advance in Loudspeaker design" and certainly it is a radical departure from conventional ideas. Hitherto, enclosure designers have been at great pains to minimise panel vibration, even to the extent of having the walls filled with dry sand (Micafil Vermiculite, by the way, is better, dry or wet), or of building them of solid brick or concrete.

The present design is based on a directly opposite idea. Virtually it says: since panel vibration is so difficult to avoid (and yet not so difficult to tune) why not make controlled use of it to strengthen the bass response and at the same time to reduce the size and the height of the enclosure.

The form chosen for this resonant housing, no doubt after a great deal of experiment, is that of a tub made of bonded fibre 20 in. deep and measuring 18 in. by 13 in. at the top. About an inch below the top a wooden panel is fixed and on this the three loudspeaker units are mounted to radiate upwards. One is a 9 in. by 4 in. elliptical unit with a 11,000 gauss magnet; the other two are 4 in. tweeters. With the larger unit there is associated a tunnelled vent coming up to the surface baffle from inside the tub, and giving a "controlled Q", which of course means that it is rather sharply tuned to the surround frequency of the unit. The frequency range claimed for the combination is from 40 c/s to 17 kc/s.

Hinged to the baffle is also a curved deflector which can be set at any desired angle, so that the system can be arranged to be either omni-directional or partially directional in a horizontal plane.

The tub is finished to a sandstone colour and is carried by a chromium plated framework. The deflector is finished in Walnut or in Sapele Mahogany. Altogether a decidedly "contemporary" style, which will look either distinctive or somewhat incongruous according to the existing style of the furnishing in the room.

As usual, our first test was a white noise test. The results were decidedly promising; we could detect very little coloration at any part of the scale. The bass was stronger than one would normally expect from a speaker of this size, though still somewhat weaker than that from our large enclosures. The treble range was remarkably good, and the middle register devoid of unpleasant peaks and troughs.



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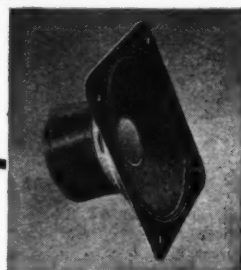
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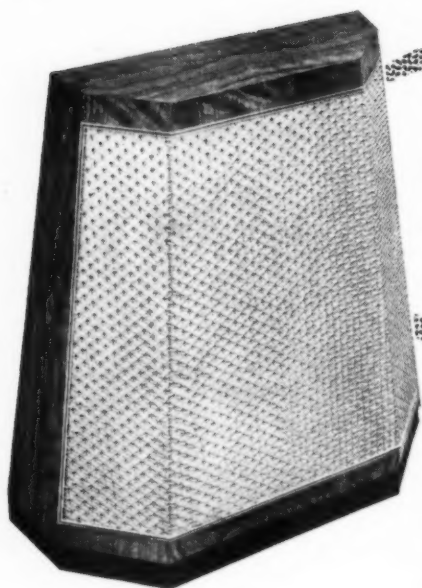
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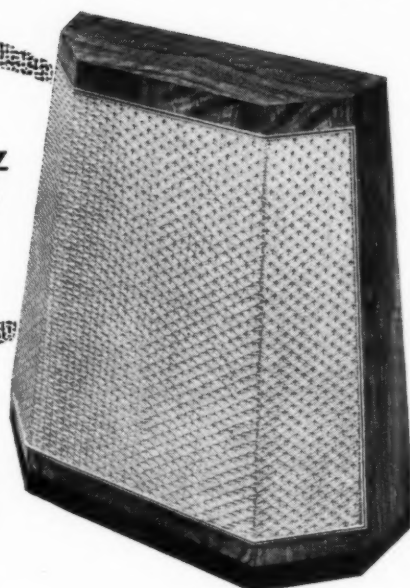
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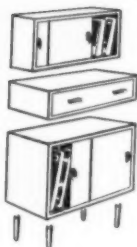
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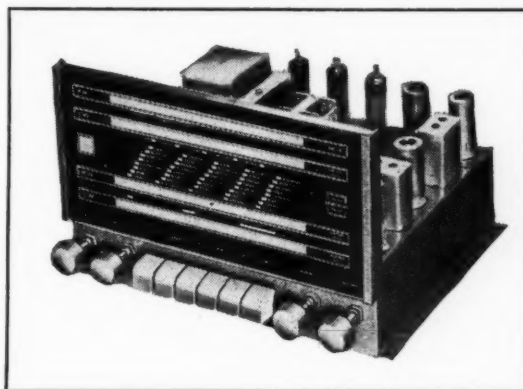
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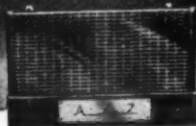
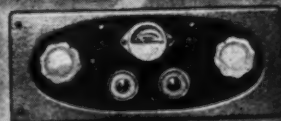
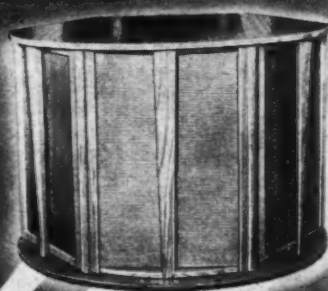
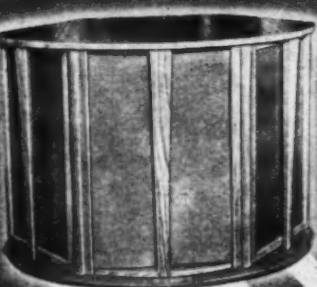
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Used singly the speaker is thus particularly suitable for a smallish room or modern flat.

A couple of speakers can be set up to give good stereo at distances of from 6 to 12 feet apart; the quality is rather drier and more inorganic than that from our more expensive systems. But we much prefer it to that which is obtainable from speakers of the small box type.

When one reflects on the price of the combination and on what one is given for it, the conclusion can only be that the departure from convention has thoroughly justified itself.

P.W.

Revox Tape Recorder B36. Price 115 gns. Distributed by Romagna Reproducers, 2 Sarnesfield Road, Enfield, Middlesex.

Maker's Specification:

Speeds: $3\frac{1}{2}$ and $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s.

Spool size: Up to 10-inch.

Forward and rewind: 90 sec. for 2,400 ft.

Frequency range: $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s.—40-15,000 c/s, +1 -2 dB.

$3\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s.—60-7,000 c/s.

Inputs: 1. Microphone: 4 mV at 2 megohms

2. Radio: 250 mV at 2 megohms.

3. Radio: 10-500 mV adjustable at 2 megohms.

Inputs 1 and 2 or 2 and 3 can be mixed.

Level Control: Magic Eye.

Output: 3.5 watts.

Valves: 8 with 14 functions.

4 of ECC83, 1 of ECC81, 1 of ECC82, 1 of EL84, 1 of EM71.

Rectifier: 3 Selenium rectifiers (D.C. heating of low-level stages).

External Speaker: Connection for 5-10-ohm unit with automatic disconnection of internal unit.

Remote control: Connection for start/stop button or pedal switch.

Counter: As Position Indicator.

Controls: 5 buttons for fast rewind, fast forward, playback or record, stop, erase. 2 buttons for speed; 4 knobs for tone, volume on playback, recording for radio/phone and recording for microphone/auxiliary.

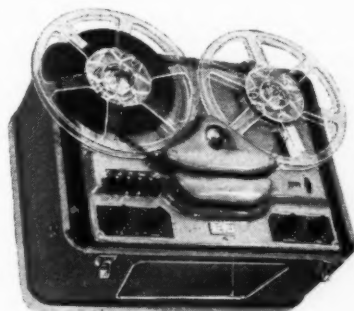
This is a recorder of Swiss origin with sufficient facilities and a standard of performance that brings it into the professional class and certainly assures it of a place near the top of the "Top Ten". It is neither cheap nor light in weight but these are attributes that are not likely to be found in any machine with such a top ranking performance.

First impressions are favourable, the case (18 in. by 13 in. by 11 in.) being tastefully finished in a two-tone plastic imitation hide. The bottom of the case is completely detachable and reveals the whole of the electronic circuitry for service though the mechanical details are not so well exposed. The top cover is removable to facilitate use. Ten-inch spools can be used, an unusual facility that allows more than two hours of entertainment to be stored on a single spool if the lower tape speed of $3\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. is used.

A group of five pushkeys on the left hand side of the top plate select, "fast re-wind, fast wind, replay, stop, and record", though recording can only be started if both record and replay keys are depressed, a useful safeguard against accidental erasure of a recorded tape. All the keys are particularly light in operation, finger tip pressure only being required and it does not need to be the finger of a sixteen-stone labourer.

In front of the keys are two knobs, the left one controlling "bass boost" but also having the mains switch ganged on it, while the right one is a gain control for replay when the knob is pushed down and an amplifier gain control when the amplifier only is being used for public address work. When recording is in progress the two positions allow the incoming signal and

the signal being recorded on the tape to be monitored, a most valuable facility for any professional worker.



In the centre of the panel is a very effective volume indicator of the EM71 Magic Eye type, while on the right hand side just in front of the spool is a footage counter of the three digit variety, driven from the right hand spool by a short rubber belt under the top plate. The reset knob of the footage counter is of transparent plastic, illuminated from its inner edge by the "mains on" light, a very neat idea, for the projecting knob can be seen over a very wide arc from almost any angle.

At the right hand side front are two further knobs controlling the level of the input signals from "mike" and "radio" the internal connections allowing the two incoming signals to be mixed to produce a musical background for speech or a commentary to be added to music, again an unusual facility.

All the sockets for input and output signals and the mains connections are mounted in a small panel at the back of the machine, a neat arrangement but one that is not quite so handy as having the sockets on the front of the recorder.

The arrangement of tape heads is unusual in that all the heads are arranged on an arc, the tape being held in contact with the heads without the use of pressure pads. This is common in professional machines but unusual in recorders of the portable variety. A tape pressure operated switch is fitted to the left hand side of the head assembly to shut down the drive when the tape runs out, a very useful idea that eliminates the need for supervision as the end of the tape approaches. It is an alternative to the use of a metalised leader and has the advantage of dispensing with special leader strips.

The tape run is also almost unique in that the tape slot is free from little projections that snarl up a tape when it is being inserted. During a month's use there was no occasion on which a slightly twisted tape managed to get into the slot but on the wrong side of a guide pin or lodge on the top of a roller, a small point but one that leaves an easy-to-use impression.

Two tape speeds are available, $3\frac{1}{2}$ and $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. per second, the choice being made by two small pushbuttons near the front edge of the left hand side escutcheon plate, two similar buttons on the right hand side escutcheon plate making a slight change to the drive to minimise "wow" when large size spools are being used.

Being a machine of Swiss design and manufacture a high degree of mechanical excellence is expected and is obviously achieved, for mechanical noise and vibration are particularly low, the machine being one of the quietest known to the reviewer. The brakes are smooth and very effective in bringing the tape to a standstill without breakage or spillage, further evidence of good mechanical design.

An equal amount of care has clearly been devoted to the electrical design for the perform-

ance is excellent in all respects, a result that was fairly obvious after a few minutes' listening to a commercial tape. When playing these commercially recorded tapes only the performance of the replay system is important. The replay response measured using a professional tape, EMI SRT13, is shown in Table 1, from which it will be seen to be flat out to at least 10 kc/s with only a slight rise at the low frequency end of the range. With the bass boost control at "max" the response is also shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Frequency Response of Replay System

f	"Flat"	With Max. Bass Boost
40 c/s	+3 dB	+14 dB
60	+2 "	+12.4 "
110	+7 "	+7.6 "
200	0 "	+3.6 "
500	0 "	+1.3 "
1 kc/s	0 "	0 "
2 "	0 "	0 "
4 "	0 "	0 "
6 "	0 "	0 "
8 "	0 "	0 "
10 "	0 "	0 "

For domestic recording the combined "record" and "replay" response is significant. The result of recording a series of constant frequency tones and replaying into a 10-ohm load is shown in Table 2 and it will be seen that the performance is of a very high standard. At the lower speed of $3\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. there is naturally some loss in performance, but it is still exceptionally good for such a low tape speed.

Table 2
Frequency Response of Record and Replay

f	$7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. dB	$3\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. dB
40	0	0
60	0	0
110	0	0
200	0	0
500	0	0
1 kc/s	0	0
2 "	0	0
4 "	0	-4.4
6 "	0	-12
8 "	-1	-
10 "	-2.5	-

A flat frequency response can always be secured at the expense of some increase in tape noise and it is therefore interesting to see from Table 3 that the noise is about 53 dB (weighted) below a 1 kc/s signal recorded at full level as indicated by the Magic Eye. The unweighted value of 43 dB suggests that there is a fair proportion of mains frequency components in the residual noise but the performance in respect of signal/noise is very satisfactory.

Table 3
Signal/Noise Ratio, $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s.
Noise 43 dB (unweighted) below max. recording level.
Noise 53 dB (weighted) " " " "

The "wow and flutter" figures, Table 4, confirm the excellence of the mechanical design and the workmanship. Mechanical disturbances are low as the Table shows, but equally important, the variation in the wow and flutter figures during the run of a spool of tape is also low. At $3\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s., "wows" are naturally higher than at $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. but the performance is still well above average for a portable machine.

Table 4
Wow and Flutter
At $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. Replay only .07%
Record and replay .1%
At $3\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. Record and replay .16%

Three input sockets are provided, one having an input resistance of two megohms and requiring about 4 mV to give a full deflection of the volume indicator, while the other two are intended for radio or gramophone signals and require roughly 250 mV for full recording level. One input has a small pre-set control which allows that particular input signal to be balanced against the other, another very convenient feature.

An output socket is provided for an external speaker, for though the internal unit provided

has a performance that is above average (it is a twin cone speaker) the size of the enclosure naturally prevents the performance being classed as "high quality".

A month's use of the Revox has left a very pleasant impression of a soundly designed and engineered machine, of good performance, exceptionally easy to handle and very convenient to use. It can be recommended without any reservation.

J.M.

WAL Tape Eraser. Price £7 18s. 6d. Wellington Acoustic Laboratories, Farnham, Surrey.

Every modern Tape Recorder includes an Erase head so that the tape can be wiped clean before a new recording starts. At least, that is the idea. But these things, unfortunately, do not always work out according to plan. Some recordings are terribly difficult to wipe out completely by this method, especially if a different instrument has been used for the recording. Many a time in my early recording days I had valuable recordings spoiled by just a faint background remaining from a previous effort. One could not consider oneself safe even with a new tape, for sometimes the tape manufacturer had recorded a strong constant frequency tone right across both tracks of the tape and including the tiny space in between. That is probably the most difficult of all to erase on a twin track machine, for there is usually a thin line remaining untouched, and the slightest misalignment of tape during a subsequent recording will then be sufficient to include this thin line as a background noise.



I myself have therefore made it a practice during the past few years to run through a tape both ways with the erase on but recording volume zero before embarking on the recording proper. This does help a bit, though it does not really meet the single track case I have just mentioned. But of course it takes a long time to perform the preliminary erase and check it on playback. Henceforth I shall not have to worry any more, for I have acquired a WAL professional tape eraser which wipes both tracks perfectly clean in a space of half a minute. It will accommodate 5 in., 7 in., or 10 in. reels. All one has to do is plug into AC mains, put a reel on the pin, press a button and turn the reel round two or three times, and the job is done. The secret of course is the powerful electromagnet which the eraser contains. How large this is can be gauged from the fact that the whole thing in its aluminium casting weighs 7 lbs. and measures 6½ in. by 4½ in. by 3½ in.

When the button is released the electromagnetic field collapses but there is bound to be a little residual magnetism. The tape spool must therefore be removed before release of the button. Moreover, the eraser should not be kept in proximity to recorded tapes. I find by the way, that most people are not careful enough about keeping tapes away from magnetic

fields, whether created by magnets or electric lights or fluorescent tubes or what not. One of my friends, for example, left a couple of tapes on a side table not so long ago where the boxes were ever so handy for the cleaner to use as a stand for the telephone. Next time he came to use the tapes he wondered what in the world had happened, for the volume level was modulated in a most curious fashion.

So do please take a little care in finding places both to store the Eraser and to use it. Properly used it is a real godsend. P.W.

Three Demonstrations

During the past month I have attended three demonstrations, each of which seemed to me to reveal something of importance. The first was a showing of the American Ampex system of recording TV on magnetic tape. I had previously watched the B.B.C. Vera (though only via my TV screen) and had been duly impressed with the possibilities of attaining any desired frequency response from magnetic tape by increasing tape speed. But the Ampex system is more subtle. The tape appears to pass not at a speed of hundreds of inches per second or anything of that sort, but at the usual 15 i.p.s. How then is the high tape-to-head speed secured? By the simple expedient of having four heads on a rotating disc and recording across the 2-in width of the tape in channels 10 mils wide and inclined at the appropriate angle to the vertical. The mechanical problem then becomes one of synchronising the speed of the heads with the speed of the tape so that each head takes over at precisely the moment when the appropriate section of the inclined channel comes into view. The rotational speed required for a 15-in. tape speed and suitable spacings of the channels on the tape works out at 14,400 r.p.m., and this gives a "writing speed" of about 1,500 i.p.s. With thin tape about an hour's recording is obtained on a 12½-in diameter reel.

The instrument, as I saw it in operation at the headquarters of Associated Rediffusion in Kingsway, had been adapted by the Rank-Cintel organisation to work to British television standards. We first of all saw a live performance of ladies from the *Folies Bergères* and simultaneously watched it being reproduced on the TV screen. Then within a few minutes we had the same performance reproduced from the tape recorder, and I can positively testify that at that interval of time one could not detect any difference.

The significant thing to me about the system is that the limits of operation are so extensible that recording of colour TV comes well within bounds. What with this and with stereophonic sound, the day does not seem to be far distant when we can have a realistic performance in our own homes. Of the *Folies Bergères*? Well...

Who now is going to produce Stereoscopic TV?

Soundrite

The other press demonstration was by that young but enterprising firm of Bond Street who have recently been producing a succession of novel instruments and electronic devices. This time it was a new stereo amplifier we were invited to inspect and listen to. There are two models, one giving 12 watts and the other 25 watts per amplifier. There are two interesting things about the design: one is the method of assembly on three sub-chassis which leads to substantial economy of space; the other is the

Postscript

Since writing the foregoing I have learned that Recording and Broadcasting companies who have to store and transport tapes from place to place take meticulous precautions to screen the tapes from magnetic fields. Messengers are even forbidden to carry tapes on the Underground railways lest the stray fields from the motors, etc., should cause trouble. It should be remembered too that fluorescent tubes and other types of electrical discharge apparatus are best avoided.

TECHNICAL TALK

construction of both the output and the mains transformers so that size can be reduced. I hope to give a full dress report on these amplifiers in a not too distant issue.

The performance was given in the British Council's Cinema with two of the Soundrite Company's own loudspeakers. The quality of reproduction was distinctly good though the stereo effects were not up to the standard I now know can be realised. This was because the speakers had had to be placed too close together on the small stage for the size of the hall. The sound source was therefore spread over only a relatively small distance, compared with the distance away of the listener. This experience bore out to the full the conclusions I have formed from my recent tests that stereo only comes really to life when the main speakers can be placed up to 12-15 feet apart, and at the same time one can arrange the system so that the middle is filled in. That is vital. If, in the desire to fill in the middle, you put the speakers too close you will get just an enlarged monaural and not true stereo.

Imhof's

My third special visit of the month was to the new showroom at Imhof's which has been specially reconstructed for the display and demonstration of high quality reproducing apparatus of all makes. No, perhaps not quite all, for one of the gambles of to-day is to guess how many new amplifiers will be announced within each monthly period. The reason is of course that provided one starts with a good output transformer it is not a difficult matter to design a reasonably satisfactory amplifier. It is perhaps not so easy to produce them in quantities to a consistent standard!

I was fascinated by this new method of display because it gave a comprehensive view of the various products that are available; but it also made me wonder how confusing the multiplicity must be to an ordinary buyer. Fortunately, Goff Imhof, like his mother before him, makes a point of encouraging (that word is perhaps an euphemism) his sales staff to familiarise themselves with all the salient points about all the things, records, players, pickups, amplifiers and speakers which are on view. The other thing that fascinated me was the wide range of cabinetry that is now available for hi-fi apparatus to suit any style of furnishing from the ancient to the modern, the period to the contemporary.

Stereo Standards

It will be recalled that in a special Editorial in our June issue we called attention to the standards that had been agreed at the Zürich Conference last November and endorsed at a meeting of the Record Industry Association of America in March. I learn, however, from Pye Records Ltd. that their correspondence from members of the semi-technical public

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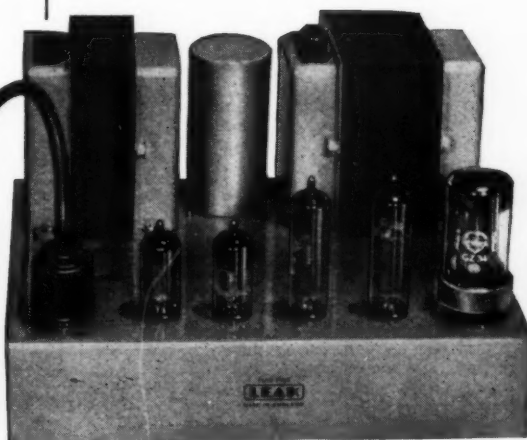
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The Point One Plus pre-amplifier and TL/12 Plus amplifier when used with the best available complementary equipment give to the music-lover a quality of reproduction unsurpassed by any equipment at any price. Even when the complementary equipment falls below that of the best obtainable, the use of these amplifiers will enable one to obtain very marked improvements in reproduction.

The new Point One Plus and TL/12 Plus were exhibited and demonstrated at the New York Audio Fair and received enthusiastic consumer acceptance resulting in initial orders for one thousand one hundred and fifty sets.

**TL/12 Plus Power Amplifier**

**30 GNS
COMPLETE**

A price made possible only by
WORLD-WIDE SALES

LEAK amplifiers have been the choice of the B.B.C. (over 500 delivered,) the South African Broadcasting Corporation (600), I.T.V. and many other Commonwealth and overseas broadcasting and TV systems, who use them for transmitting and/or monitoring (quality checking) the broadcasts to which you listen. Also, many of the gramophone records you buy are cut via LEAK amplifiers. This acceptance by professional audio engineers has led to a demand for LEAK equipment from music-lovers throughout the world.

It is appropriate here to mention one of the basic principles of LEAK design. From long experience and by extreme attention to design details during development work on the pre-production models, we enable our craftsmen to achieve a high output per man-hour. The labour costs thus saved offset the increased costs incurred for high-grade materials, components and finishes, and this together with quantity production (made possible only by a world-wide market) explains how quality products may be sold at reasonable prices.

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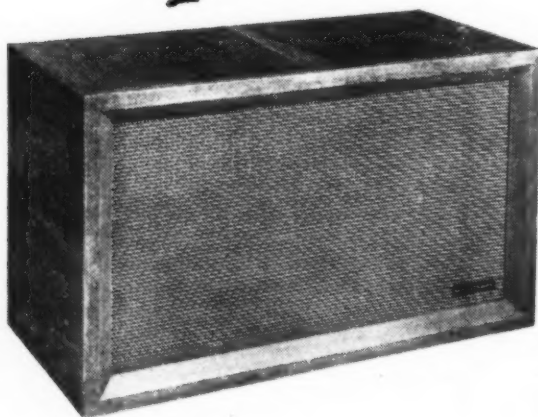
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A. It is a complete **FULL FREQUENCY RANGE** (35 c/s.-16,000 c/s.) 3-way High Fidelity Loudspeaker System, whose Enclosure measures only 24" x 12½" x 14½".

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A. There is no compromise on bass performance because of small enclosure size. The 12" bass unit is designed and built solely for a rigid enclosure of this size. The mid-range and high frequency units (both pressure driven and horn loaded) are the finest of their type.

Q. How has this been achieved?

A. This bass unit has a unique newly developed triple suspension system operating in conjunction with pneumatic air control. Perfect control is maintained by a very efficient 22 lb. magnet system.

Q. What about power handling capacity?

A. The IB3 will handle a maximum input of 25 watts, speech or music, without distress or distortion.

Q. Where can it be placed?

A. On a bookcase, in a room divider, on a table, window ledge, on the floor, in fact, in any convenient position.

Q. Is distortion increased in any way?

A. On the contrary, it is far lower than most standard size High Fidelity systems in its price range.

Free on request: 1958 High Fidelity Loudspeaker Manual. Fully describes all Goodman's High Fidelity Products.

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Stereo 1
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reveals that a certain amount of confusion still exists, particularly on two points.

Perhaps I may be excused therefore for stressing these two points once again, and making it clear that all the British and European Recording companies, and, so far as my present information goes, all the American Recording companies too, are adopting the same standards.

1. The signal that is intended to appear primarily in the left-hand speaker is recorded in the wall of the groove nearer to the spindle; that intended to appear primarily in the right-hand speaker is recorded in the wall of the groove nearer to the outside of the disc.

But the best way of ensuring that the reproducing system is set up right is to have a record in which a speaker says: "I am now speaking on your left (or your right)"; if you hear the voice as stated then you are O.K. If the voice appears in the wrong side then you should interchange your loudspeaker connections.

2. The signal in the left-hand channel is recorded in phase opposite to that in the right-hand channel. The technical reason for this is to ensure that when the signals reaching the two recording microphones from, say, an orchestra, happen to be in phase, or nearly so (which, on the average is more often the case, than the opposite) they will appear on the groove as a lateral cut rather than as a vertical cut. There are three technical advantages in this as compared with the alternative:

(a) The stereo disc will be playable monaurally, through one amplifier system. But, please, oh please, not with an ordinary monaural pickup. That would ruin the disc. You must have a properly designed stereo pickup, even for playing monaurally, so as to ensure that you have the minimum that is necessary of vertical compliance. Such a pickup will also play monaural discs—better indeed than the standard monaural pickups of today.

(b) The tracing distortion is reduced, and a $\frac{1}{2}$ -mil stylus can be used at a lower playing weight. (Note, however, the point I referred to last month that this may bring the treble resonance of the pickup half an octave lower.)

(c) The treble transfer loss is also reduced. I mention these points for the technically minded. For the ordinary man, the important conclusion is that the recording companies should issue a special disc to enable the apparatus to be set up properly and to be checked and readjusted from time to time. I have already mentioned the value of a metronome recording in this respect. But it is not the only possibility even for its limited purpose, and perhaps for some stereo systems not the best device. Let me summarise. What we need as a practical measure are means of checking by ear and on the spot, not in a laboratory.

- (i) the actual balance between the two channels, and preferably at more than one frequency.
- (ii) The sense of the recording between the two speakers, so that left is left and right is right.
- (iii) the phasing of the connections to each speaker, so that the sounds of the two add when they are supposed to add and subtract when they are supposed to subtract.

Stereo Discs for Demonstration

Three demonstration discs for stereo have so far been issued in this country: the first by Pye, the second by E.M.I. and the third by

Decca. The Pye disc was in use at the Audio Fair, and parts of the E.M.I. disc also. The Decca is new; only a small part of it have I heard before.

Pye CSCL70007 (12 in., 47s. 11½d.).

Since I acquired my first copy of this disc (and I have had three altogether) it has been in regular use for technical purposes. For Side 1 contains not only a recording of single tones from 40 c/s to 15 kc/s for amplifier alignment (but, alas, recorded only on both channels at the same time so that it cannot be used to check cross-talk); there are also special signals to check the setting of amplifier levels and blank grooves for checking turntable rumble. The metronome signal for balancing the two channels I have found particularly useful; in fact, my wife nowadays insists on my using it first of all at the beginning of every stereo session. I could have wished for two other signals for checking purposes; one a deep bass rumble of some kind suitable for checking speaker phasing; and the other a direct instruction to the effect that when you hear this it should be coming from the speaker on the left—so that the sense of the two speaker connections could be checked as well as their phases. This latter check we do in fact get later on; but it is buried in the conversation piece at the end of Side 1 where two friends of mine are discussing what stereo means—and a useful discussion it is, judging by the comments of visitors who come to hear stereo at my home.

The second side of the disc contains musical excerpts, starting with Larry Adler and the Pro Arte Orchestra playing a Spanish Dance, and proceeding through excerpts from the *Light Cavalry* Overture, to a Bach Fugue and a Handel Concerto and to more modern examples (including the inevitable *My Fair Lady*). I should not call any of them particularly exciting, or indeed particularly well chosen examples for bringing out the highlights of stereo.

E.M.I. SDD1 (12 in., 47s. 11½d.).

The first side of this disc consists of gimmicks, apart from the last excerpt which is from Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony. And very good gimmicks they are: Sound Effects, Fire Alarm, Table Tennis, Swimming Bath, Road Drills, Big Ben and the surrounding traffic, a Blacksmith's Forge, Express and Goods Trains. What the Fourth Symphony has in common with these I don't rightly know. But I have no doubt at all that when Dealers play this side in their open shops (and of course it is specially designed for dealer demonstrations) they will run the risk of police displeasure because of the crowds they will attract outside.

The second side contains various musical excerpts, most of which we heard at the Audio Fair: *Beggar's Opera*, *Peer Gynt*, *Emerald and Tartan*, Verdi's *Falstaff*, *Happy Banjos*, Dagenham Girl Pipers, *At San Remo*, and last of all a Metronome included at my request so as to check the channel levels (I want every stereo disc to include such a piece on the continuous run-out groove at the end). The excerpts have been skilfully chosen to show particular features of the stereo scene and the recording is of high standard, as is also the processing of the disc.

Decca SKL4001 (12 in., 42s. 10½d.).

This includes some of the old gimmicks (Train sequence and Racing cars, originally recorded, I believe, for the conversion of America) and a particularly attractive new one—The Ceremony of the Keys at the Tower of London. Most surprising effects here. Side 1 also includes an extract from *España* by the L.S.O., another from Ansermet's recording of *The Rite of Spring* (including a bit of the

rehearsal—very effective this), an excerpt from the *Ride of the Valkyries* (startlingly realistic), and a particularly glossy example from Mantovani's recording of *True Love*.

Side 2, similarly, caters for all heights of brow. It starts with *Capriccio Espagnol* (L.S.O.), goes on to Kirsten Flagstad in *O Divine Redeemer*! (What a difference stereo makes to the quality of her reproduced voice!), Dave King in *There's only one of you*, Vera Lynn in *Another Time, Another Place*, Ted Heath and his Band playing *June is busting out all over* (and about time too!), Backhaus playing Mozart's *Concerto in B flat Major* (how stereo does add to the singing quality of a piano), Winifred Atwell playing *Portrait Painter of Paris* and lastly, the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra in an excerpt from Berlioz' *Symphony Fantastique* (colour, colour, colour all the way).

There is a particularly happy commentary by Geoffrey Sumner which adds substantially to one's enjoyment of the record. Again the recording and processing are of a high standard.

Another Test Record

Writing the foregoing reminds me of another test record that has recently become available in this country, though primarily only for monaural systems. It is of American origin but has been made available over here by our contemporary *The Gramophone Record Review*. Besides the usual recording of single tones throughout the scale it contains a number of special recordings that can be used with advantage by ordinary folk who have no access to measuring instruments (other than their ears which, in many respects, are the most sensitive measuring instruments of all). Thus there are sections for tuning the ports of loudspeaker enclosures, for checking equalisation in the amplifier (though here a valve voltmeter is required for anything more than a snap judgment), for checking the set up of stylus, pickup and carrying arm, and for the amount of turntable rumble. Then there are means provided for the following checks: recording level, pitch standard, smoothness of amplifier and speaker system (including cross-over). Lastly, there is a series of musical box selections on one side and a sound effects quiz on the other, which includes 17 "queer noises" all of which should be recognisable on a good reproducing system. Some of these are perfect for the test at (i) of Stereo Standards. For this purpose, one plays the record through the stereo system and adjusts the levels so that the queer noise sounds exactly mid-way between the speakers. The record is obtainable from Francis Antony Ltd., Pennare House, Veyan, Near Truro, Cornwall, price 39s. 11½d.

New Stereoscopic Tapes

I have recently received from E.M.I. a copy of one of their latest stereo tape recordings. It is a masterpiece, both from the point of view of performance and that of recording. It is the Columbia tape of the complete recording of *Der Rosenkavalier*, the monaural discs of which were so enthusiastically reviewed by A.R. last December.

There are four 7-inch spools altogether, BTA126-7-8-9; and each one is quite thrilling. I have such vivid recollections of the first time I saw *Der Rosenkavalier* in the 'twenties with Lotte Lehmann, Elizabeth Schumann and Maria Olszewska (and Richard Mayr, if my memory serves me right) in the principal parts, that it has always been a favourite of mine. Naturally, I played first of all the Trio at the end of the third act and then went back to the end of the second act to listen to the "Herr Cavalier" and "Mit Mir" tunes. They brought back all the old nostalgia. So much so, that I listened once again to the singing and forgot that my purpose was to listen to stereo effect. I

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POPULAR RECORD CATALOGUE
JULY, 1958

managed to drag myself back to that, eventually, and found it to be as near perfection as I have ever heard—so near indeed that it was quite unobtrusive until one looked for it. And this excellence was maintained through all four tapes. The first one, incidentally, contains some particularly interesting examples of stereo depth as well as stereo breadth.

When all is said and done, however, it is the naturalness of the whole thing that is so very impressive. It is beyond my sphere to comment on the performance—particularly after A.R.'s praise; but I do feel that I must give the warmest congratulations both to the recorders and to the anonymous backroom boys who have copied the tapes for publication.

Kelly Ribbon Tweeter

Since I wrote my report last month I have learned that the intention of marketing the Senior Model has been abandoned, at any rate for the time being.

It has presented some problems of magnet production, but what really decided the question was the fact that by a comparatively small modification of design of ribbon placing and of the acoustic load in the cavity behind the ribbon it has been found possible to increase the efficiency of the Junior model by a further 4 dB. It is now possible, too, to lower the cross-over frequency to 1,000 c/s—or shall we say 1,500 c/s to be on the safe side.

All models that are now to be supplied will be of this improved type, and my report should be amended accordingly. I have actually changed the two I had for review and have the new ones working in my home now.

Incidentally, I have found alternative placings for the tweeters for stereo. I will say more on this whole subject next month, for I believe I have at last resolved what ostensibly were contradictory conclusions of various people. At the moment I will only say that my best results are with two omni-directional columns with two tweeters arranged to squirt additional treble to a focal point or focal line just above one's head in the middle of the room.

Stereo Seen Personally

I find the analysis, on page 117 of this issue, by Mr. Railton (obviously better known to most of us for his accomplishments in the field of motor engineering) particularly interesting, and do not doubt that his conclusions are not very wide of the mark. I should surmise, however, that his tentative guess of a further life of five years for non-stereo records is an understatement

by at least five and probably ten years. And I would add three observations which, I think, contain the explanations of some of his queries.

1. There seem to be many more halls in Europe than in America that have proved to be acoustically good for recording. Perhaps there is something special after all in the elimination of the poor and the indifferent by time and long experience.

2. Recent American stereo tape recordings show a distinct improvement on those made even as recently as six months ago. Whether this is due to different microphone placing, I don't know. But I have no doubt that the quality is richer and the stereo "looking" more sure.

3. It is, of course, quite true that at the moment stereo recording is experimental and that much of the experience of monaural recording will not apply. But it is already tolerably clear that once one or two questions have been settled, consistency in recording will be secured more positively for stereo than has proved possible for non-stereo. I certainly believe that stereo will in time make recording more of a science and less of an art. P.W.

The Radio Exhibition: Aug. 26th-Sept. 6th

The provision of an Audio Hall this year may well prove to be an innovation of significance. About 50 firms are taking part; most of them were also active at the Audio Fair in April, but there are some others, notably the Decca Record Company, who, we understand, are making this the occasion for introducing stereo disc recordings (as well as apparatus for reproducing them) to the general public. On the other hand, several firms who specialise in High Fidelity apparatus will not be represented.

For North American Friends

My many gramophone friends across the Atlantic may like to know that I shall be over there in the autumn and shall be glad to have a chat with any of them who are close to my line of route.

My time-table will be roughly as follows: October 8th—Montreal. 9th/18th Hamilton. 18th/24th—Hartford, Conn. 23th/31st—New York. November 1st/16th—Boston.

During my visit I shall be happy to lecture to any Societies or Groups who would like to know something more about our British approach to Sound Reproduction. No doubt, if desired, I might be able to arrange demonstrations of British equipment. PERCY WILSON.

I WAS THERE—No. 2

By W. S. BARRELL

The Introduction of Electrical Recording

In 1924 broadcasting was getting firmly into its stride and this had a serious effect on the sale of gramophone records. By present-day standards the quality of broadcast reproduction was poor but the impression of space and more open tone, gave a much more satisfying sound than was to be obtained from the gramophone. So, record sales slumped—but not the enthusiasm of those in control of the Industry. Within a short time the major record companies in this country established experimental departments to adapt as far as possible the principles of broadcasting to recording.

In the acoustical or mechanical recording system the actual sound waves produced by the artist operated the recording mechanism which cut the groove on the master wax. In the electrical system the sound waves do not

operate the recording mechanism direct. A microphone diaphragm receives them and the amplified electric currents operate a special cutting head.

As the microphones and amplifiers were common to both broadcasting and recording the special problem confronting the gramophone companies was the development of a suitable electrically operated cutter.

Although considerable progress had been made we were still very much "experimental" when the Western Electric Company of America solved the problem in a most ingenious way. By applying filter principles they were able to produce a cutter covering a much wider frequency range than hitherto and without the resonances of the old mechanical cutter.

An agreement was made with the Western Electric Company and engineers went to New Jersey for technical instruction prior to

taking delivery of the equipment. Thus a new era in the recording of sound began.

These early recording outfits were quite simple, a single microphone with attendant amplifier, a voltage amplifier with a gain control and a power amplifier to drive the cutting head. But from the operating point of view, the technique of recording had changed completely. Gone was the necessity for bunching the performers close together; the use of a sensitive microphone allowed them to be grouped more or less as for a normal concert performance. But this spreading out at a distance from the microphone brought to light for the first time the importance of studio acoustics, a problem we have had with us ever since.

This complete change in operating conditions naturally meant a lot of work and concentration for the operating staff, but realizing the possibilities, they quickly adapted themselves to the new conditions and soon became "tolerant" of the newcomers, the electrical engineers whose job it was to maintain and set up the equipment. In the days of acoustical recording each recording engineer made his own cutter and so it was at first with some diffidence that they used an instrument which had been calibrated by "one of those electrical blokes". Confidence was, however, soon established to the advantage of all concerned. We worked in pairs, a recording engineer and an electrical engineer, and for the first few years I was fortunate in having as a partner the late Charles Gregory, then Columbia's chief recording engineer. Charles had the reputation of being a little "difficult", but I never found him so. On the contrary we got on extremely well together through, I think, mutual respect.

We travelled a great deal and made many trips to the Continent. The introduction of electrical recording meant hard work and long hours, for not only was the existing catalogue largely obsolete, and had wherever possible to be remade, but the new system opened up an entirely new field of recording. Take, for example, the Church Organ. Here was something new and test sessions were arranged at the Crystal Palace, Duke's Hall, the Liberal Jewish Synagogue and Christ's Church in Westminster Bridge Road. The recordings were made "over landlines", that is to say the microphone output, suitably amplified, was fed via telephone lines to the power amplifier and cutter in the studio building. The hazards of this method of working were many. In the middle of an otherwise good recording would come a loud ringing tone or perhaps a conversation. On other occasions an over-zealous post office linesman would cut us off altogether. Nevertheless despite these many difficulties good records were made.

Around 1927 I became entangled, in a small way, with the Talking Picture business; perhaps that story can be told later. But firstly there is more to say about our early electrical experiments, especially with organs.

BOOK REVIEWS

An Approach to Audio Frequency Amplifier Design. Price 10/6. G.E.C. Ltd., Kingsway, London.

This is a valuable Reference Book, and indeed book of instruction, both for the technician and for the ordinary man of intelligence who wishes to learn not the proofs or the theory of valve amplifiers, but the circuit arrangements that have been found to give the most acceptable and reliable results.

Although it contains only 126 pages it includes descriptions of no fewer than 17 amplifiers, both A.C. and D.C./A.C., ranging from 5 watts to 1,100 watts output; and it includes

Talking of
assemble
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GULIV



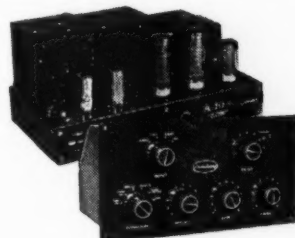
Words of Wisdom from Hi-Fi Know How

"Man who buys unsuitable Hi-Fi set through inexpert advice is like a man who uses shovel to eat grapefruit."

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GARRARD TA Mk. II.

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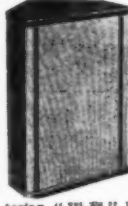
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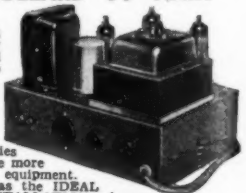
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a couple of comprehensive designs for pre-amplifiers and tone control units.

It starts with an informative chapter on the principal features and design criteria for an amplifier and ends with four appendices on Multiple Pair Push-Pull Amplifiers, Output Transformers and Stabilisation, Valve Ratings and a Glossary of Abbreviations (in which, I am glad to note, the abbreviation for decibel is given as db and not dB. But why not also mv for millivolt?).

It should be added that the script is well-written and very readable and the printing production beyond reproach. P.W.

Maggie Teyte. *Star on the Door.* Putnam 18s. For charm, wit, honesty, common sense, and lack of egotism, Maggie Teyte's book takes a high place among singers' autobiographies, and my only criticism of it is that it is far too short.

When she was touring in America during the 1914 war it was the custom, she tells us, to paint a star on the doors of the dressing rooms of principals. On the large mirror inside one of these Miss Teyte found the following rhyme, written in lipstick:

"Twinkle, twinkle little star
Who the hell do you think you are?"

She adds the comment, "What a pity more mirrors are not scribbled on in these days!"

One of the most interesting chapters is about the famous Jean de Reszke method. He believed, in terms of vocal technique, "It was good to try out the most difficult things first, because afterwards everything else seemed comparatively easy" but preceded this by giving the student a carefully graded system of exercises.

Miss Teyte based her exercises, finally, on the aria "Depuis le jour" from *Louise*, which she sang daily. At this point I rebelled against the fact that, as the discography in the book shows,

she never recorded this aria, and of Mozart only "Voi che sapete" (unpublished!) and not a note of *Madame Butterfly*, in which she gave a most beautiful performance of the name part, or of *Pelléas et Mélisande* (except two small excerpts in 1940) in which she was the perfect Mélisande.

There are wise words here on the singing of Mozart, on tradition, on French Song, and on recital giving (though her list of songs in English is disappointing): and she reproduces the fascinating account of her association with Debussy, which she has broadcast several times. Has any singer, I wonder, ever before headed a chapter in an autobiography, "Failures". This Miss Teyte does, giving the reasons why she failed, and there can be few more poignant passages in any autobiography than those in which, in 1937, this great and famous artist, was told by an agent in New York, "there's no opening at the moment—you see, they have forgotten you, here."

Her triumphant "come back" in 1945—at the age of fifty-eight—in America is a thrilling page, a great tribute to her fighting spirit and to the sure technical foundations Jean de Reszke had laid down so many years ago which enabled her to sing up to her seventieth year. We are now eagerly awaiting LP recordings of the Debussy songs Miss Teyte made with Cortot and of the many discs of French song she made with Gerald Moore. These must not be delayed, for the gramophone have given us few more precious things.

Maggie Teyte was, I think, pleased with the honour recently given to her—though she does not wish to be known as "Dame"—but she knows very well that those of us who have followed her career from the outset, and many others since, canonised her long since in our hearts. She is among the elect.

exuberance and charm, and it is hardly fair to complain that they have been more recorded than they deserve. No. 3 has, it is true, been done three or four times, but until a month or two ago not one of the other five was available, and as it is the record in question presents the fifth sonata for the first time ever. As for your reviewer's suggestion that "the real glories of the Italian tradition" (Corelli, Vivaldi, Geminiani, Locatelli "and the rest") are in danger of being neglected, I should have thought a glance at the catalogues would have dispelled any such fears: on the contrary, it would surely be more realistic to admit that there is more danger of our being swamped by "baroque" music, all too little of which is worth the money in recording it, unless it is superlatively played. And that is just where the Virtuosi di Roma are so wonderfully refreshing. Surely it would be very hard to imagine a more delightful record?

London, W.11

ROBIN GOLDING.

Dennis Brain

It is just about a year since the world of music suffered an irreparable loss in the person of Dennis Brain and I am writing to suggest that his recordings, made for the B.B.C. and other broadcasting services, should be made available to the public on gramophone records.

This has been done in the case of Dinu Lipatti and it seems to me at least equally desirable that the performances of the greatest horn player of our time should be preserved. I am thinking above all of the recording of the Trio, Op. 40 of Brahms.

Lebach/Saar,

JACQUES DELALANDE.

Germany.

Christopher Tye

In his review of the recording of Tallis' *Lamentations*, included in your July issue, Denis Stevens quite properly deplores the lack of available recordings of music by Tudor composers. But he is not quite fair to the recording companies. There are two recordings of an anthem by Tye available: *O come, ye servants* appears in both the 1937 Coronation service, and in a performance by Canterbury Cathedral choir in Columbia's *English Church Music* series (LXI1382) which has just appeared on an EP disc.

These performances have one quality that the Tallis lacks. Whereas they are given by choirs with boys' voices—the combination for which all English cathedral music has been written—the Tallis record is made by a consort ideally suited to vocal chamber music such as madrigals, but by its size and composition cannot be held to be capable of performances of cathedral music in accord with the intentions of the composer. This is especially noticeable with regard to the hymns on the record and, more especially, to the Archive recording of some of Gibbons' anthems (APM14056), for which the Deller Consort was responsible also.

Worthing, Sussex.

WYN K. FORD.

London Audio Fair

I have read with considerable interest the letters from Messrs. D. A. Lyons and V. G. P. Weake. May I also append my views? I have been connected with the radio and gramophone industry for some 28 years and never, in the whole of my experience, have I heard such a cacophony of distorted noise as was generally heard in the overcrowded corridors of the Waldorf Hotel during the last Audio Fair.

I wholeheartedly agree with Mr. Lyons that bedrooms generally have bad acoustics, but if this was appreciated by the London Audio

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor does not necessarily agree with any views expressed in letters printed. Address: The Editor, THE GRAMOPHONE, The Glade, Green Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex.

Giuseppe di Stefano

May I lend support to your correspondent Mr. J. A. Burns, concerning the merits of Giuseppe di Stefano?

From the time I first heard his rendering of the two Sicilian Folk Songs issued on 78's, I have followed his career with considerable interest. Without doubt, the voice has lost much of that early beauty, but its haunting quality is still there. To me he seems always to get right into the music and to carry it along with great ardour and individuality.

I must admit that I do not find him consistent. His voice sounded rather heavy in *Rigoletto* for instance, and heavy work was made of "Questa O Quella", yet his singing in the recording of *Butterfly*, *Tosca* and *Bohème*, especially *Butterfly*, I consider superlative. I would go so far as to say that his singing gives me more pleasure than any other contemporary singer.

I should like to appeal for an operatic recital by this tenor. It seems strange that Decca should have issued umpteen LPs of a rival tenor, namely Del Monaco, singing it seems, every known tenor aria, and yet we have only one 10-in. LP devoted to Di Stefano.

London, S.W.11.

R. O'CONNOR.

R.C.A. Orthophonic Recordings

I do not wish to dispute what Mr. B. B. Chinoy says about R.C.A. records. I haven't any microgroove records with the R.C.A. label,

or any made from R.C.A. originals. Mr. Chinoy's remarks may, however, cause misunderstanding where the engineering side of record making is not understood.

Since 1954 or 1955 the R.I.A.A. (Record Industry Association of America) characteristic for microgroove records has been adopted by almost every company in the world. (For example see "The Pursuit of High Fidelity" published by E.M.I. Records Ltd.) And it may be taken as certain that this characteristic applies to R.C.A. records—at any rate recent issues. Trade marks and slogans such as "orthophonic", "frrr", really belong to earlier times when each company had its own preferred characteristic, and might even, because of tie-ups with companies in other countries, be issuing at the same time records intended for different play-back characteristics.

I think it only fair to say that, whatever one's judgment on R.C.A. records, very high quality recording is done in the U.S. For example, Beethoven's Violin Concerto with Milstein and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra on Capitol P8313; and Schumann's *Davidstündertänze* and *Etudes Symphoniques* played by Firkusny on Capitol P8337 are outstandingly good recordings, and have been very well received in England and elsewhere as many readers will know.

Malvern, Worcs.

E. F. GOOD.

Virtuosi di Roma

Shame on Mr. Noble for his disparaging remarks about the latest record of the Virtuosi di Roma, reviewed in your last issue! Perhaps the Rossini sonatas for strings are not "really of any importance", but I can think of few such pieces that come anywhere near them in sheer

Fair's Committee they should not have allowed their use for demonstration. I, personally, visited every demonstration room at least once during public hours, and in only three demonstrations did I hear material which I consider to be of professional standing; this was, in part at least, because there were too many people in the room at the time. Visiting demonstration rooms at private sessions did give a very much better showing, but the worth-while exhibits which were offered to the general public could be counted on the fingers of both hands.

The obvious thing is for the industry to put its house in order. It is recognised that there are too many exhibitions throughout the year, and a properly conducted and well-run High Fidelity Section at the National Radio Exhibition would probably solve the question. I would further suggest that all exhibits in this Section be vetted by an independent body of experts nominated jointly by the Institution of Electrical Engineers, the British Institute of Radio Engineers, the British Sound Recording Association, and one of the learned musical societies. In this way, adequate demonstration facilities under correct conditions could be provided and the emphasis on commercial sales ventures need not be quite so apparent as at the last Audio Fair.

Enfield, Middx. STANLEY KELLY.

The Havergal Brian Society

On 22nd March, the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Norman Del Mar, gave the first performance of Havergal Brian's Ninth Symphony, which was composed in 1951, as part of an orchestral broadcast in the Third Programme. No one who heard this work can doubt that Havergal Brian is a major symphonist, a man with something strikingly original to say.

He was born in Staffordshire in 1876 and the neglect that his music has suffered is, in my opinion, an appalling injustice, a poor reward for such courage and originality. We have too few composers of genius to neglect even one of them. It is in order that some redress shall be made for this neglect that a number of ordinary members of the music-loving public are forming a society to further performances of Brian's works. It will be known as the "Havergal Brian Society". Membership entails no more than an expression of interest in Brian's music, and a promise that whenever possible members will listen to any broadcasts, attend any concerts or buy any records of his music that may appear or take place from time to time. We appeal to all who have the best interests of English Music at heart to support us in this venture by giving us their name and address to add to the list of members.

London, S.W.2 R. L. S. TAYLOR.

(Letters will be forwarded. Ed.)

THE INDEX TO VOLUME XXXIV IS NOW OBTAINABLE, PRICE 2s. 6d. (PLUS 4d. POSTAGE) FROM "THE GRAMOPHONE", 49 EBRINGTON ROAD, KENTON, HARROW, MIDDLESEX.



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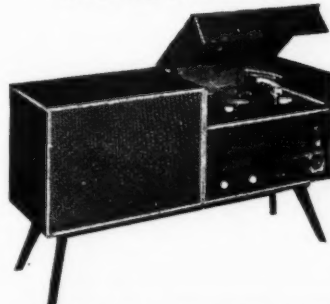
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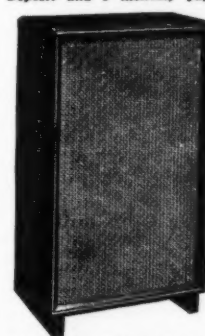
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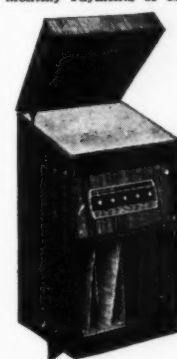
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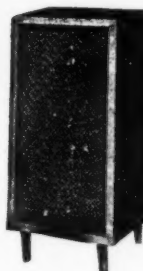
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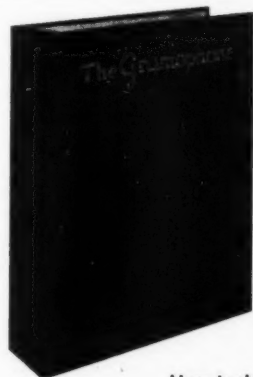
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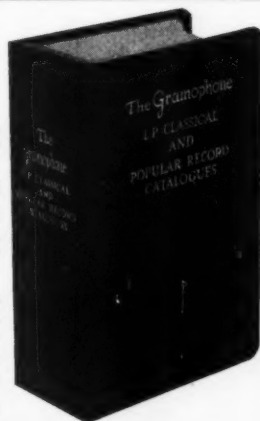
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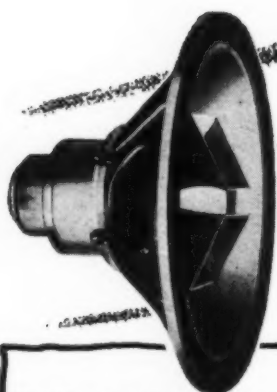
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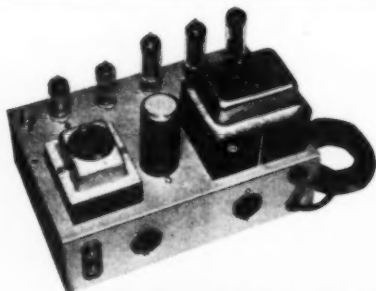
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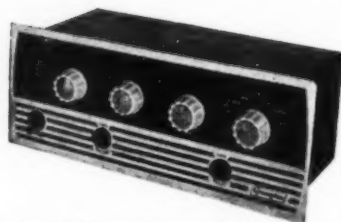
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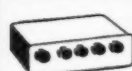
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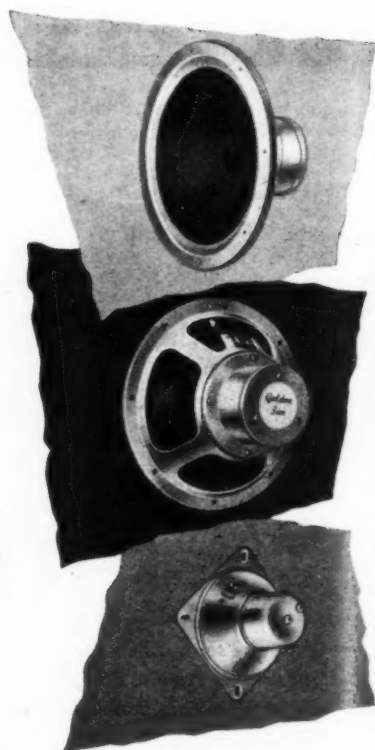
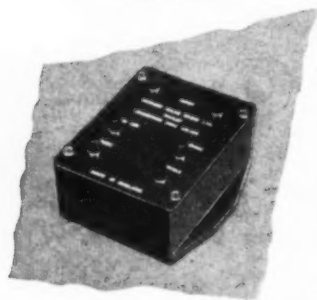
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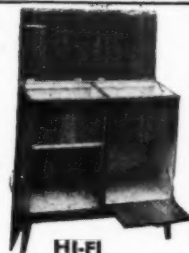
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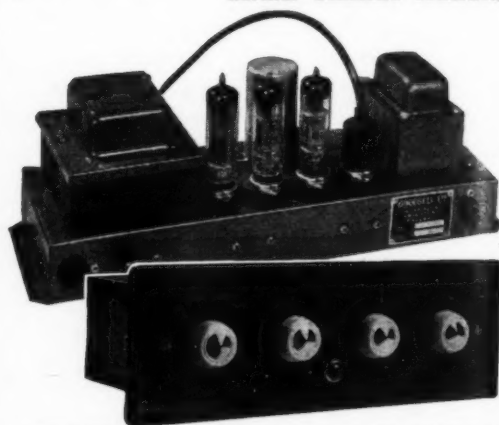
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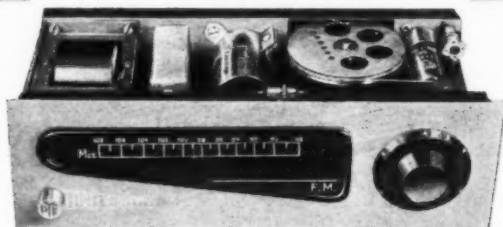
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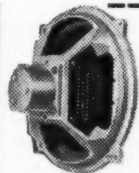
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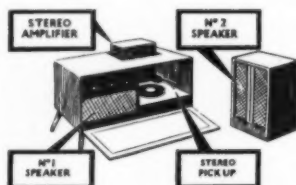
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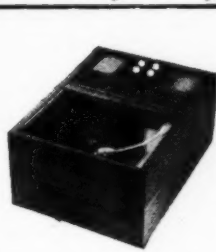
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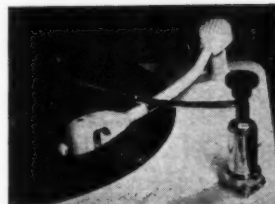
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INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

	PAGE		PAGE		PAGE
Acoustical Manufacturing Co. Ltd.	3	Fane Acoustics Ltd.	50	Philips Electrical Ltd.	33
Azate & Co. Ltd.	44	Franel Laboratories Ltd.	71	Philips Electrical Ltd. (Fontana)	37
Allan, Richard, Radio Ltd.	63	Furlong, A. T. & Sons Ltd.	69	Phoenix Group	69
Armstrong Wireless-Television Co. Ltd.	51	Garrard Engineering & Manufacturing Co Ltd	12	Premier Radio Co.	68
Audio-Plan	61	Gibb's Bookshop	70	Puxley, A. E. Ltd.	71
Auriol (Guildford) Ltd.	71	Gibbs, Herbert E. Ltd.	70	Pye Group Record (Sales) Ltd.	27
		Golding Manufacturing Co. (G.B.) Ltd.	14	Pye Ltd. of Cambridge	47
Beam-Echo Ltd.	34	Goodmans Industries Ltd.	54	Quality Mart	55
Benfell, F. Ltd.	69	Goodsell Ltd.	66		
Bensted's Ltd.	69	Goodwin, C. C. Ltd.	28	Radio Centre (M.O.S.)	67
Berry's Radio Ltd.	71	Gramophone Exchange Ltd.	28	R.C.A. (Great Britain) Ltd.	36
Birmingham Sound Reproducers Ltd.	9	Gramophone Reproducra Ltd.	60	Readings, B. & Sons Ltd.	71
B.K. Partners Ltd.	10	Grundig (G.B.) Ltd.	41	Record Research	46
Bowers & Wilkins Ltd.	70			Rimington Van Wyck & Co. Ltd.	64
British Ferrograph Recorder Co. Ltd.	5	Harridge, H. C.	70	Rogers Developments (Electronics) Ltd.	48
B.T.H. Sound Equipment Ltd.	48	Hartique Products	64	Rogers of Woking	70
Broadway Radio	63	Heinitz, Thomas	67	Romagna Reproducers	71
Browns of Chester Ltd.	63	Heliodor Record Co. Ltd.	22, 23, 24	Rola-Celestion Ltd.	13
Burne-Jones & Co. Ltd.	Cover II	High Fidelity Developments Ltd.	63		
		Howard Photographic	66	Sonomag Ltd.	67
Capitol Records	18			Soundrite Ltd.	39
Chapman, C. T., Reproducers Ltd.	42	Imhof, Alfred Ltd.	Cover I, 69	Sound Sales Ltd.	52
Chelsea Record Centre	11	International Collectors' Agency	72	Sound Tape Vision	66
City Sale & Exchange Ltd.	Cover II			Specio Ltd.	54
Cloake, L. & H.	69	Jason Motor & Electronic Co.	61, 4	Stamford, A. L.	37
Collaro Ltd.	30			Stave, Henry & Co.	25
Collectors' Corner	22	Keith, Prowse & Co. Ltd.	19	Stern Radio	56
Columbia Records	Supplement, 17, 31			Stylus Replacement Service	72
		Larps of Holborn	32	Surdan, A. & R. Co. (Engineers) Ltd.	35
Davies, A. & Co.	70	Leak, H. J. Ltd.	83	Supraphon Records	69
Deca Record Co. Ltd.	I, 29, 30	Lee Electronics	70	Sypha Sound Sales Ltd.	68
Donagall Enterprises Ltd.	44	Lewis Radio Ltd.	71		
Drawda Hall Bookshop	70	Lionnet, John & Co.	58	Tannoy Products Ltd.	Text 136
Dudel Co. Ltd.	65	Lloyd & Keyworth Ltd.	59	Tele-Radio (1943) Ltd.	63
Duede Ltd.	58	Long Playing Record Library	11	Tellux Ltd.	61
		Lustraphone Ltd.	Cover II		
E.A.P. (Tape Recorders) Ltd.	43			Vitavox Ltd.	8
Electro Acoustic Industries Ltd.	54	Margolin, J. & A. Ltd.	66	Vogue Records Ltd.	44
Electric Audio Reproducers Ltd.	7	"Metropole"	72	Volmar Products	65
Elwin, Henry Ltd.	70	Millers (Cambridge)	70	Vortexion Ltd.	2
E.M.G. Handmade Gramophones Ltd.	20	Modern Electronics Ltd.	51	Vox Productions (G.B.) Ltd.	21
E.M.I. Assimil	46	M.S.S. Recording Co. Ltd.	15		
E.M.I. Institutes (Chiswick Division)	82			Watts, C. E. (Dust Bug)	67
E.M.I. Records Ltd. (Stereo)	16	Northern Radio Services	48	Webb's Radio	65
E.M.I. Records Ltd. H.M.V.				Weimec Corporation	40
Front and Back Cover, Supplement	6	Pamphonic Reproducers Ltd.	59	Wharfedale Wireless Co. Ltd.	42
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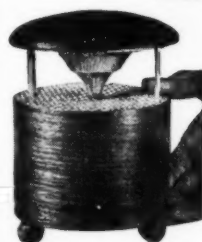


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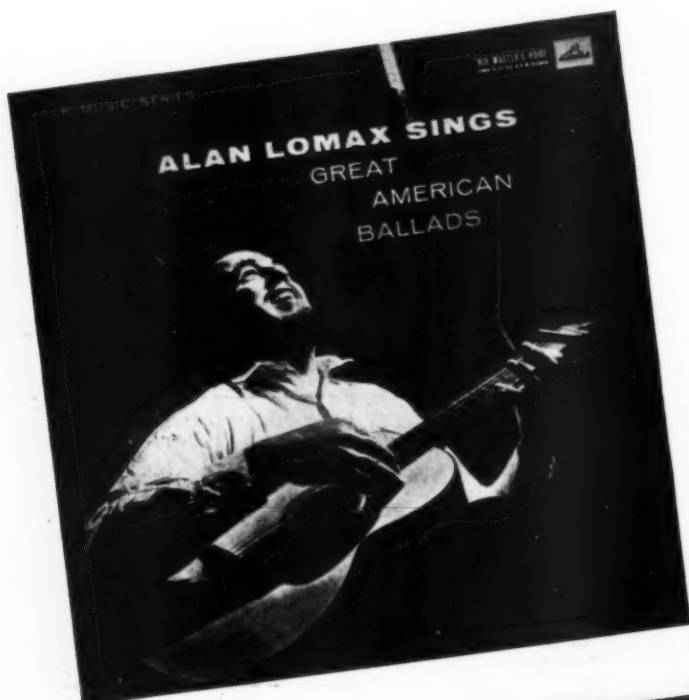
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